

# The Papakura Sentinel



Number 69

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## *Greetings/ Kia ora koutou to all our readers,*

2024 is here, and so are we. And guess what, we're all a little more mature! Welcome to 2024.

This issue presents articles representing work by two new researchers. Dena Gilmour writes about her exhibition of ladies' hats in the Museum. Neville Williams has been poring over documents with a fine-toothed comb, and brings early Papakura and some of its personalities to life, this time three men who could have been Papakura's earliest Pakeha settlers but for changing Government policy. I have also included a Postscript on Kirikiri, based on contacts since the research was published, much of it in response to a request for feedback that Anna Part had put up on the Museum Facebook page on my behalf.

A team of volunteers selects an object for special display on the Museum every month, and Wendy writes about it in each issue. And Alan Knowles, our Curator, tells us more about the Ring's Redoubt display which is currently nearing completion. The display involves archaeological remains from the 1860s and some amazing interactive technology. A Memorial gathering for PDHS stalwart Bill Hart is planned for 14 February—see notice page 16.

The Museum year begins without a Front of House person with a greater need for volunteer support, and with an exciting programme. The Ring's Redoubt exhibition is part of it. *Old School Tech*, which wows younger locals, remains for one more month, and will be followed by *Violet's Scarf*, based on a picture book by Colleen Brown about an event in World War 1.

The PDHS is on its toes with talks organised by Phil for the fourth Thursday of each month and trips organised by the Trip Committee. Feedback will be invited on trips at the next meeting. And having established last year that Saturday afternoon Museum Talks are popular, we will host five of them over the year, the first by a descendent of the Pitcairn mutineers. See What's On—on page 17. Walks are planned as well—see page 18.

Life will be returning to normal, with tweaks.

*Sit back, relax, enjoy—Rob, Ed.*

## PAPAKURA & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Monthly Members' Meetings: 4th Thurs, 1pm – 3pm  
 Regular Saturday heritage Trips to places of interest

## PAPAKURA MUSEUM

**Open: Monday—Friday, 10am—4.30pm,  
 Wed open till 6 pm, Sat 10 am—3 pm**  
 Accent Point Building, 209 Great South Road  
 Ph.: (09) 298 2003 www.papakuramuseum.org.nz

# Object of the month

Contributed by Wendy Deeming



**Printing plate for “Fernaig” butter**, used on wooden butter crates for export. These were used to mark the butter crates so that the maker could be identified if necessary. The name was applied to the first branded butter produced at Papakura, circa 1900. This was the forerunner of the Fernleaf, Anchor, etc brands.

*Accession Number 12144*

*Donated by Linley Talbot, 12 May 2023*

*\*And no, the printing plate photo is not accidentally reversed.*



**Wooden walking stick** which unscrews into three parts – one with a pencil, one with a pen nib, and one with a walking tip.

*Accession Number 8582*

*Donated by Justine Taylor, November 2008*



## **Series introduction: Early Papakura identities**

In the last two years, while *Sentinel* was running a series on Kirikiri, the area now known as East Papakura, Neville Williams has been delving deep into the history of the old Papakura Village and surrounds, going back to the first European settlers in the early 1840s who had direct dealings with Te Akitai and other iwi, and were the founders of the Pakeha settlements which became Papakura and Drury. Neville is descended from the Johnston and other local families and has lived most of his life in this area, so has a deep connection with the places and families. He has combed zealously through maps, photographs, rates books, council records and deposited plans, and has an eye for minutiae: nothing escapes him. This patient sifting through detail is bringing the past to life.

This first article also owes a debt to research by Lloyd Walker, former Museum curator, and uses part of the text on Adam Chisholm for an article he submitted for the local paper, *Our Town*.

## **Baffled by Pre-emption: the Pioneers that Weren't**

**Rob Finlay, incorporating research by Neville Williams**

**Adam Chisholm, George Hart and William (and Elizabeth) Hay**

They were the first European purchasers of land in the Papakura district, and their purchases were made when Governor Fitzroy waived the provision in the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi which reserved to the Government the right of pre-emption in the purchase of Māori land. Fitzroy was operating under huge financial constraint. The expenses of running a colonial administration far outweighed the finances available, and in 1844, under pressure from prominent businessmen, he resorted to allowing land buyers direct purchase from Māori. Pre-emption Certificates were issued to validate such claims, the transactions to be taxed. This waiving of pre-emption was popular at the time, both among Māori and prospective land purchasers, providing a more direct way of doing business. However, Fitzroy's recall and the appointment of George Grey as Governor in 1846, brought this scheme to an end. Grey was a very capable self-advertiser and managed to convince the Colonial Office to fund his administration amply while blackening the name of his predecessor. In the process, quite a few would-be settlers or speculators had their fingers burnt.

Three men were affected by erratic policy on land sales in the Papakura district. Had matters turned out otherwise, they would have been the earliest local Pakeha settlers. In the event only one of them lived in this district for any time. This article focuses on Adam Chisholm.

**Adam Chisholm** is all but forgotten. However 180 years ago part of Papakura was known as Chisholm Town and Kirk's Bush was previously known, when it was much larger, as Chisholm's Bush. Adam Chisholm had a connection to the district before the Coles, Willis, McLennans, Walters, Clows and Runcimans, and the area of land he claimed was larger than any of them ever claimed. In about 1990, the Papakura District Council created the small landscaped and planted reserve by the Settlement Road realignment adjoining the cemetery and named it after him, probably in response to Lloyd Walker's research.

Chisholm was a shepherd from the Scottish Highlands, probably driven from his croft during the Clearances, that shameful period in Scottish history when English landlords and Scottish lairds established great estates running sheep at the expense of the small farmers. It is possible he worked as a shepherd for one of the landlords for a time. The crofters fled south to the swelling cities and industrial jobs or crossed the Atlantic to the New World. For many emigration was the only hope for survival.

In 1840, New Zealand Company agents in Great Britain were extolling the advantages of settlement in New Zealand – a beautiful climate, cheap land and the freedom to make one's fortune with little effort. Adam Chisholm availed himself of the opportunity and embarked on the *Slain's Castle*, arriving in the new Wellington Settlement on 15 January 1841. He was single and about 30 in age [according to the *Slains Cas-*

*the* passenger list, which conforms with the age recorded at his death].

There was little employment in Wellington at the time, so he was among those who took ship for Auckland where he set himself up as a butcher with a slaughter-house in O'Connell Street in the heart of the embryonic town, an activity that led inevitably to difficulties, which Chisholm magnified by his behaviour. Over a 20 year period he was summonsed to court on around 60 counts: for recovery of bad debts, cattle trespass, breach of the Slaughterhouse Ordinance, defamation, assault and even threatening behaviour with a firearm. 'If anyone personified the Auckland frontier, it was surely he.' (Paul Monin, author of *Waiheke Island: a history*.)

His dream, however, was to be a land owner. Seeing the big land speculators such as John Logan Campbell and his partner William Brown and others buying vast tracts of land and selling it soon after for considerable profit, he determined to 'join the club'. Speculation in land was a feature of colonisation, then as now. Most of the names printed over blocks of land in early maps record financial interests anticipating a sale at greatly increased prices, land banking with no interest in personally farming the land. Many bought from overseas through agents or had no intention of remaining in the country. Chisholm was one of those with an interest in farming.

In December 1844, Chisholm bought from seven chiefs (some later records list five names) the land described as follows (Preemption Certificate #120 and Deed 100):

'A portion of land at the head of the Manukau River, Opaheke by name, containing about 1,000 acres, commencing at a place called Mangatahi on the River Manukau, running thence through Waikowhai to Te Pukepuke to a stake erected by the chiefs [Ihaka (Takaanini) named elsewhere], striking thence in a straight line to a place called Whakarau, and thence to Otuwairoa following the coast to Mangatahi.'

It is a pity that these Māori names have now been lost. A modern description of the boundaries would be:

'Starting from a point where Slippery Creek meets the Hingaia Inlet, clockwise round the coast to Wharf Street, then in a straight line to a point about half-way down Willis Road, then following the creek (Otuwairoa) that leads to Slippery Creek, and along Slippery Creek to the starting point.' It is accurately described as the Hingaia Block, as the Hingaia (Drury) Creek forms the Western and Southern boundaries. This is an area covering much of Papakura, half of Kirikiri, the Hingaia peninsula and south to Slippery Creek, but north of most of today's Drury village. A survey showed not 1,000 but 2,193 acres (almost 1,000 hectares).

The payment for all this land was two horses, two bridles, one good saddle, one box, two spades, one double-barrelled gun, one blanket, one shot belt, one powder flask and twenty two pounds ten shillings [\$45] in cash. The chiefs signed a deed of sale, and were reportedly happy with the transaction. Chisholm approached the Governor who issued a Pre-emption Certificate on 3 January 1845.

With the additional purchase of 2,800 acres at Lucas Creek (Greenhithe) and 390 acres on Waiheke Island, Chisholm no doubt felt that he had at last arrived, and could take his place with the land barons of the day. He was working with borrowed money, and few who borrowed money to speculate in land prospered. Little did he know what lay in store for him!

At about the same time, George Hart, described in the 1850s as a General Dealer of Wyndham Street, bought 800 acres 'north-east of Chisholm's claim' from 'Pepenu' (Pepena te Tihi, father of Ihaka Takaanini—Certificate 121), and William Hay, builder of Parnell, bought 990 acres at Opaheke (Certificate 173). That virtually surrounds the land that Te Akitai reserved for their own use, Te Kirikiri.

Barely two years later, George Grey reversed the policy of allowing direct sales from Māori to settlers: all land would henceforth be bought by the Government, who would on-sell it. Grey decreed that all the old land claims would be reviewed, and those that met his criteria would be allowed, on payment of 5 shillings per acre to the Government, claims being limited to 500 acres. The uproar that followed this decree can be imagined. Those who refused to pay, Chisholm included, had their claims reviewed in 1846, and in nearly every case, legal rea-

sons were found to disallow the purchases. Chisholm (in June 1848), Hay and Hart were among them, reverting overnight from substantial landowners. Chisholm was again merely a butcher in O'Connell Street.

Chisholm, however, was made of stern stuff, hardened by his up-bringing on the Scottish Highlands. He set to work to obtain justice, a battle he fought with single-minded determination for the next 14 years. He found a willing ally in John Williamson, the owner of *The New Zealander*, which published Chisholm's letters, condemning the authorities for their actions. As well as this, Chisholm believed, rightly or wrongly, that William Brown, proprietor of the rival newspaper, *The Southern Cross*, was trying by subversive means to buy his Papakura land. (Lloyd Walker) In the meantime, Chisholm appears to have run cattle on the Papakura block, unfenced of course.

In 1851, the Government sent surveyors to Papakura to subdivide the land into blocks for sale and settlement. They had barely started when local Māori started pulling out the survey pegs, making the work impossible. So the Surveyor General finally came to Papakura to see what the problem was, and was told: 'Those chiefs who sold the land to Chisholm were Ngāti Whatua. They had no right to sell the land. It was not theirs to sell. This is our land, we are Ngāti Pare.' The Government had to pay Ngāti Pare £280 to allow the survey to proceed. (Ngāti Pare was a Te Akitai hapu living locally. One of the rangatira who had signed the original deed, Hemi Te Ngohe is elsewhere described as being 'chief of Te Uri o te Ao of the Nga Tipare', so some may have had joint affiliation.) [Auckland Province Gazette, Te Rape Block, Deed 225, 1852])

In 1852 the survey was completed, and the land was ready for sale. The sale was advertised for 28 September, but Chisholm was not done yet. He failed in an attempt to have the sale postponed, so he attended the sale with a prepared statement setting forth his claim to the land, which he insisted the Government representative read out to the prospective buyers, not once but twice in case it had not been heard properly.



Map: Papakura Village 1853. Breakwater against the tide, page 55.

After this, nobody would bid for the land and it was passed in.

This minor victory only postponed the inevitable, and although Chisholm threatened to petition the Queen for resolution of a perceived injustice, the Government went ahead and sold all the land zoned rural in the block.

The surveyors had allowed for areas to be set aside for Papakura Village (bounded by Coles Crescent, Great South Road, South St and the coast line) and Drury Village (bounded by a line from Slippery Creek through Gatland Road to the Hingia Inlet).

Drury was to be on the north side of Slippery Creek, but

James Runciman subdivided his land on the south side first: Runciman's Township became the centre of Drury. (The Gatland Road cemetery was originally intended to be the cemetery for Drury Village set aside in the 1852 survey.) Most of the Papakura and Drury Village land had been part of Chisholm's claim.

This is how things stood until the Government of Governor Thomas Gore Browne passed a law in 1859 agreeing to review the old land claims. Chisholm immediately applied for a hearing which took place on 1 October 1859 before Commissioner Dillon Bell. The judgment, delivered on 30 November, upheld Chisholm's claim to the land. Chisholm was paid one pound per acre for the rural land, which had been sold. The town lots had not been bought so he was granted approximately 74 acres in Papakura (the areas designated 4—except for sections 1-4 where the Papakura Hotel later stood—and 5, and an adjacent part of 3 on the Village map above) and 137 acres in Drury, totalling about a tenth of the original grant.

Chisholm features vividly in memories of early Auckland life. He and his horse Sligo were part of the Auckland Anniversary Day Races in 1847. Years later, the *Auckland Star* (15/2/1924) recorded memories of the 'Fifties' by J McCombie. Writing about Captain Beckham, the Resident Magistrate, put McCombie in mind of:

'a businessmen trading in Queen Street during the early sixties ... named Adam Chisholm, who was one of the celebrities of the place. Accustomed from his birth to the freedom of action characteristic of the Highlands of Scotland, he cordially hated police interference of every description, and his troubles were numerous in consequence. His worst enemy was considered to be Captain Beckham, who fined him so frequently for trivial offences that he called one of his Collie dogs 'Beckham' by way of retaliation. He used to ride a handsome thoroughbred horse, and was always accompanied by this particular dog. Whenever he chanced to meet or pass the Captain on the road he invariably called out to the dog in a loud voice, "Come awa' ahint Beckham, you dam't scoundrel, come awa' ahint and dinna gang forrit agin till I bid ye!"'

Continuing on, his story suggests that Chisholm was farming his Papakura or Drury land, the cattle presumably roaming at large on unfenced land.

'When passing to and fro between the town and the farm, Chisholm patronized all the pubs en route, and more often than not completed his journey badly intoxicated. One day, on the farm, the late Rev. Thomas Norrie took him to task about his drinking habits. They were standing close to the bank of a small stream where a cow was just then in the act of satisfying her thirst. "Now, Chisholm", said the Parson, "Take that cow for example. She has just the one drink, and immediately afterwards she goes her way about her business." Chisholm replied, "That's a' right meenister, but supposin' there was another coo on t'ither side o' the burn cryin' oot, 'Here's to ye Hornie!' what would happen?"'

The story may be apocryphal, but other tales refer to the same issues. Paul Monin, Waiheke Island historian tells much the same story. The purchase of land at Putiki (Ostend) on Waiheke involved manipulation of conflicting iwi claims to land, and in subsequent years there were disputes with Māori, with other settlers and with a stockman he employed. He also had to fight for title for his Putiki land. In the meantime he ran cattle and sheep on this claim while living in Auckland. Once a Crown Grant recognized him as owner of 397 acres in 1860, he shifted to Putiki, but 10 troubled years later he sold his Waiheke land to the large absentee landowner George Graham, and moved back to Auckland.

In 1860 he appears to have been living in the Royal Arms in Auckland. He was in his fifties and no longer had the will to fight. His dream of bringing members of his family to start a better life in New Zealand had evaporated. (Walker. One of the Kirikiri settlers who came out to New Zealand in 1865 was a William Chisholm, but there is no indication that the two were connected in any way.) By this time he was in financial difficulties, and money was more important to him than land. The Government's memory was long, and five shillings per acre was deducted from the settlement.

In early 1865, he had put up his Papakura land – all of Papakura Village south of Elliott Street—for sale, a total of 260 quarter acre sections. The occupied village in 1865 was all north of that line, mostly in the area(s) marked on the map above as 1 and 2. The sale was advertised in *The New Zealander* and *NZ Herald*. Transport was laid on to bring prospective buyers south to Papakura.

**PRELIMINARY NOTICE.**

**PAPAKURA. PAPAKURA**

**JONES & CO.**

Have received instructions to sell by auction, at an early date, at their Mart, Brunswick Buildings, **260 MOST VALUABLE ALLOTMENTS** in **PAPAKURA**, each **ONE QUARTER ACRE**, and having frontages to Government Roads. These allotments are all part of the original Government Township of Papakura. The survey will be completed in a few days, when full particulars and date of sale will be advertised.

**NOTICE.  
PAPAKURA LAND SALE.**

**THURSDAY, 21st Inst.**

**F**OR the convenience of Intending Purchaser an Omnibus will leave **Papakura** on Tuesday morning at 8 o'clock, (FREE OF CHARGE.)

**JONES & CO.,  
BRUNSWICK BUILDINGS.**

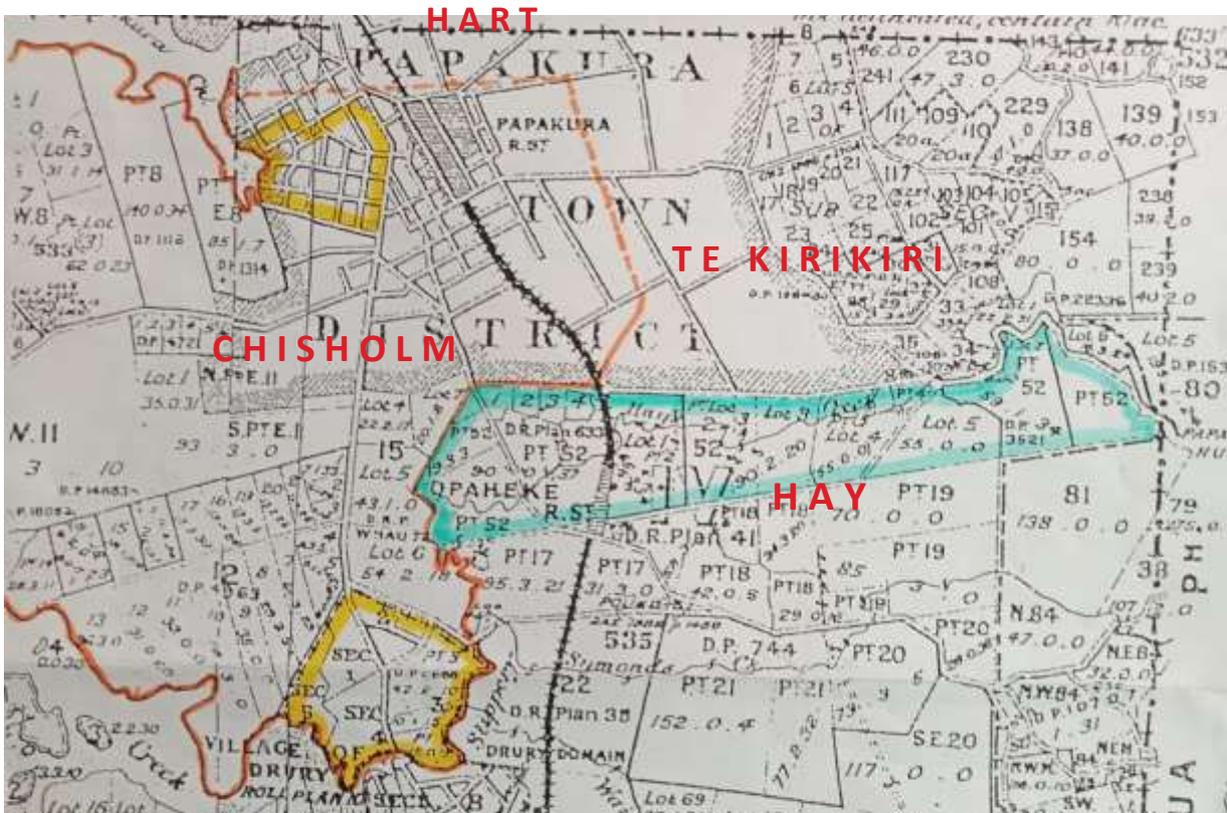
**Selling the Papakura land.**

Top: *New Zealander*, 8/2/1865; Below: *NZ Herald*, 18/3/1865

The land was bought up by agents and speculators, in particular William Aitken and the Willis family.

Slowly Chisholm descended the social scale until he was living in a slum of Auckland, with lodgings in Chancery Street, friendless and alone. In 1871 he was fined for drunkenness. On 2 April 1873, he was found drowned near Wynyard Pier at Official Bay. Last seen he had been sober and had requested a light for his pipe from some sailors. Newspapers spoke of having no fixed abode and being alone, 'rather eccentric but entirely harmless' *DSC* 4/4/1873. He had stayed twice in the Old Man's Refuge. His case was cited in newspaper debates on the adequacy of care for the destitute. *NZH* 6/5/1873 His material legacy was one 'box clothing' from his estate. *NZH* 18/4/1873.

The *New Zealand Herald's* obituary remembered him as 'previously a holder of considerable landed property in the Papakura District, and undoubtedly the best judge of cattle in the Colony.' He is some-



**Locations of the land referred to in this article, superimposed on a later map of the area.**  
Chisholm's original claim—the Eastern half— in brown outline (notional dashed line only in the north and east) with 1859 Papakura and Drury village grants in wider yellow border. Hay's 1859 grant (Woodstock) to east in green outline (52): presumably earlier grants included the rest of Lots 17, 18, 19. Hart's original claim was to the

one who could have made a fist of farming the land he believed he had bought. He was a small player in a dangerous game of political ambitions and wealthy speculators.

While Chisholm's colourful story was for a while well-known around Auckland, the other two who bought locally under pre-emption also ended up with reduced holdings in the area.

**George Hart**, described as a General dealer of Wyndham Street and a freeholder in 1853-64 Electoral Rolls, also as 'gentleman of Sydney', also disputed the loss of his land, and also appears to have been reinstated in possession of a small area, but not in the vicinity he had originally claimed. He was handicapped in his dispute with the Crown because he was overseas, and in his absence his auctioneer brother William was handling his case. In 1875 he was a householder of Union St, and had a house in Onehunga, while he appears in the Electoral Roll in Drury in 1870 and 1875 with 58 freehold acres in Hunua (Lots 217, 227, 228) in the Drury Hills area. This may be a substitute for the land he had claimed. He probably never lived in the area.

**William Hay**, like Chisholm, was a Scot who immigrated in 1840, and died barely two years after the former, in 1875. However the similarities stop there. He came to New Zealand as a builder of Government houses, including the original Government House in Auckland, 'from which he retired with a well-earned competency, the result of honorable industry and active business habits'. He was living in Parnell. He likewise ended with a reduced freehold in the Parish of Opaheke, comprising parts of Lots 16, 17, 18 and 19, which he called Woodstock. It appears he didn't occupy his land till 1850 when it was surveyed. There is a mention of Hay getting lost at the time of the survey for some hours in Chisholm's Bush between Papakura Village and his land. Hays Creek runs from the Hunua Gorge through the middle of this land, which is bisected by Opaheke Road. The family's homestead was a square double storied house built of pit-sawn timber. During the Waikato War, sawyers on his land came under attack, and the house was also attacked. He became a major figure in the Opaheke area, an employer and entrepreneur, he provided land for the tobacco grower Gotch (Edna Carson, Sentinel #52, April 2021), he was a leading light in the Auckland Coal and Mining Co, the Papakura Agricultural Association and the Presbyterian Church, and became the Franklin member for the Auckland Provincial Council. Obit *NZH* 16/2/1875. After his death, his son James Baird inherited Woodstock and much of his role, until he left the district. The Bellfield housing development project commemorates the Hays and Woodstock in some of the street names.

#### Sources:

Auckland Centennial 1940, *Early Settler Roll*

Paul Monin, *'The demon butcher of Okahuiti'*, in *Island Time*, c 1994. (Also wrote

Lloyd Walker, *Who was Adam Chisholm?*, undated ms written for *Our Town*, Papakura Museum.

*Slain's Castle passenger list*, <https://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-WarEarl-t1-body-d8-d2.html>

## Kirikiri update

### Rob Finlay

**History research** doesn't just end, as any readers who have tried their hand at genealogy discover. You think that you've exhausted all lines of inquiry, and then someone else says: 'What about this?', you start wondering about a question that you hadn't previously thought about, new information just turns up, or you have a "uh-huh, I got that wrong!" moment. So after writing the Kirikiri story, which spread over 11 articles, that is just what happened. You don't just stop thinking about it, especially when you realise there is information and significance enough for a book.

Recently, Neville suggested that the long approach to the Everslie farmhouse may have been from Opaheke Road and not from Smiths Avenue or Marne Rd. That's something I have to get to the bottom of. Earlier the same gentleman had drawn my attention to the fact that there were two William Richardsons who married Kirikiri women, and the one who was paying rates on 15 acres at the corner of Settlement Road and Kelvin Road was not the one married to Eliza, daughter of Andrew and Catherine McLean, but the one who married Anne, the widow of John Hamilton, who remained on the original grant. And then I discovered that on the neighbouring 20 acres, the Dukeson who was paying rates was another ring-in because he had married Elizabeth, the widow of Daniel Harrison. Looking more closely at the Harrisons, I discovered that they were English, from Cumbria, although Scotland would have been in view on a good day across the waters of the Solway Firth. So two families that I thought had disappeared were still living in Kirikiri for some time.

I also owe a debt to Anna Part who was looking after social media for the Museum. She put up a request on Facebook from me for more information on Kirikiri families and the Kirikiri community. And in response I heard from descendants of the Walkers, McLeans, another Campbell family (I had assumed were connected with Thomas Campbell's), McNeills, and then, more recently from Carrolls.

Those last two came as inquiries and they tied some ends together. The Anglican circuit-riding vicar, Vicesimus Lush had done a back-of-envelope census when visiting all the Kirikiri settlers, most of them immigrants on the *Viola* and *Resolute*, and though he found that most were Presbyterians, he attempted to help out in their difficulties. Along with the Presbyterians, he counted 2 Anglican families, one Wesleyan, and one Catholic. Which was the Catholic family? I found he had undercounted. I discovered that Mulgrews were, and the Deveneys (one of the few who came on another ship). I also noticed that some other surnames also sounded Irish, and possibly Catholic. But it took the Carroll inquiry to spark a specific quest. The original Catholic parish, like the others, covered a wide area, and was based at Otahuhu, the church of St Joseph and St Joaquin. Searching the register I found that Catherine Carroll was buried in Otahuhu. But it was when I looked at baptisms, which named sponsors, that the Catholic subcommunity within Kirikiri came to light. They sponsored each other's children—Mulgrews, Carrolls, Tiernans, the O'Hagans from Wairoa, and one other, Mrs Marion Fulton nee Marion McNeill, who married William Fulton, a Presbyterian, soon after arrival. When she died she was buried by Father Murphy, 'R. C. priest'. So that is four Irish Catholic families (plus the Deveneys and the family of Thomas McCaffrey, the policeman). But what of Marion Fulton? She had come out on the *Viola* with Michael, her brother. McNeill descendants had never worked out what the story was behind Michael, who disappeared after arrival and never took up the land allocated to him at Maketu, so we puzzled over this together. When I asked about Marion, they volunteered that the McNeills had left the island of Barra in the southern Hebrides during the Clearances and moved to Inverness (where William Fulton was from.) Knowing something of the southern Hebrides I researched Barra, and it was confirmed that the population there was 80% Catholic; it is described as the island the Reformation never reached. So we had, among the other Kirikiri settlers, 3 Irish Catholic families and one Scottish Hebridean Catholic lady, forming a small community (with outliers at Wairoa). By the end of the 1870s two of the six parents had died and all the Irish families had left. James Carroll married a Catholic widow and farmed on her land at Tuimata.

As for Marion Fulton nee McNeill, I hypothesise that her Michael may have never intended to settle in Kirikiri or Maketu—he certainly never took up the land, but he may have come out to chaperone his sister who was possibly engaged to William Fulton before they left Scotland. Other members of the McNeill family had previously settled in Dunedin and descendants were not aware that they were originally Catholics. So presumably they wore their religion lightly. As did William Fulton: he was buried as a Presbyterian and his second wife as an Anglican. The Mulgrew family also had other relatives in New Zealand who had sponsored some births, further evidence of chain migrations.

# A Lady Always Wears a Hat

## Dena Gilmore

### The collection

The Papakura Museum holds many interesting objects, many of which are seldom seen. On receipt from donors they are carefully accessioned, examined for damage or fragility (all of which is recorded) and then put through a process to ensure any potentially damaging microorganisms are killed (usually by placing the object in a freezer for several days or weeks). The items are then allocated a place in the climate-controlled store-room, wrapped or boxed and placed in their permanent location. Here they remain, in an environment that ensures, as much as is possible, in the condition they were when they were acquired. In all probability they will not be seen again until they are required for a particular exhibition or special digitisation projects.

### The donations

On 6 November, 2001, the Museum received a donation of 31 ladies hats dating from the 1920s to 1999. Most of these are in perfect condition and tell the story of what the fashionable woman of the day was wearing. The donor of this wonderful collection was Mrs Gertrude Joan Ducker.

In 2003, a further collection of 15 hats of similar age and quality was donated by Mrs Barbara Littlewood. The Museum is very lucky to have received such donations, and in 2023 a decision was made to put a selection from both collections on display. Not only did we want to showcase the hats, we also wanted to tell the story of the women who had donated them. We began by searching the accession records, working backwards from 2023, hoping that when we found the appropriate record it would provide us with the details we needed. Unfortunately, all we discovered was the dates the hats were donated and the names of the donors. So the hunt for further information was on. Thanks to Edna Carson, who diligently searched the historical records of the New Zealand Births, Deaths and Marriages website, Electoral Rolls, and Death Notices of local newspapers, and who then contacted the children and grandchildren of our donors, we were able to put together the following biographies.

### The donors

#### **Gertrude Joan Ducker. 1914 - 2001**

Gertrude Joan Johnston was born in Kaitaia on 8 July 1914; the eldest in a family of 7 girls and one boy. Joan was very proud of the fact that when she was eighteen, she joined the Women's Institute (WI) - later the Country Women's Institute. She was continuously involved for more than 70 years. She took an active role until 1935, when she commenced her nursing career. She met her future husband, Eric Norman Ducker, when he was admitted to Kaitaia Hospital after suffering a rugby injury to his leg which had become infected. Joan gave up nursing before becoming engaged to Norman. She and Norman were married on 27 August 1938 in the Presbyterian Church in Kaitaia. They had three children; a son (Brian) and two daughters (Lois and Lee).

Norman was a teacher, frequently in a sole-charge position in a number of isolated communities. Moving from one small community to another was a way to gain promotion. In 1949 he was invited to teach in Tauriko and moved there with his family. In 1954 he won a Fulbright Scholarship and, leaving family behind, he travelled to Tacoma, Washington where he spent a year teaching. Not long after his return in September 1955 the family moved to Clevedon where he took up the post of headmaster of Clevedon School.

A teacher's wife was expected to play a leading role in the community. Joan achieved this through the CWI. Her isolation from family and the general loneliness of rural life meant she was no different to the farmers' wives in their need to have social contact, companionship and support. She joined the CWI wherever she went (including Papakura when they were at Clevedon School), and was always an office holder of her local

branch. She first became Federation President in Tauranga, holding the position in six federations over the years. She was a long time Voluntary Organiser - which meant she was advising local Institutes that were struggling with their programmes and procedures. She was awarded their prestigious Gold Honours Badge, the highest honour in the movement. She attended their annual conference in Wellington for many years. In respect of CWI activities, Joan was an indefatigable entrant in their writing and painting competitions. She was enthusiastic about flower arranging and belonged to a local garden club, always contributing at competition time and winning many awards. This wasn't easy because her shoestring budget meant she could never afford flowers and had to make do with what she could get from others or from her own garden.

In later years, Joan moved to Manurewa to be near her daughter, Lois, and became active in a number of organisations in addition to the CWI. These included the Cancer Society and the Manurewa Historical Society. Joan joined the Historical Society in 1984. She served on the Committee as their Press Reporter from May 1990 until April 1992. Joan occasionally gave talks to members of the Society about local historical personalities.

The church (St Andrews Presbyterian, Manurewa) was her other great focus. She did the flower arranging in her church for more than 25 years and stopped only when the arthritis in her fingers made it impossible to carry on. She was into study groups and prayer rings and spent enormous amounts of time listening and offering support to others.



Joan (third from left) with her siblings at her son Brian's wedding, May 9th, 1964.

Almost all the hats donated by Joan were hers. She had them stored in boxes and wardrobes all around the rather tiny house she had in Manurewa. She was never well off but she managed a number of overseas trips, often with her elder daughter, Lois. Joan's daughter, Lee, said that her mother would sometimes sneak off on her own and fossick around and buy a hat she liked, collecting them as souvenirs "a bit like teaspoons or something". She got a bit more daring as she got older, too, and bought and wore funky and fashionable ones outside her usual style. And she had occasion to wear them regularly as she was at church every Sunday. She always had a hat or a scarf when she stayed with family, so probably the hats were worn to CWI and Mangere Garden Club as well. The hats which weren't Joan's mostly came from further back in her family.

### **Barbara Littlewood**

Barbara was born in Union Rd, Mauku on 28 June 1929. She was educated at Mauku School then a convent in Pukekohe. After leaving school she worked at the Pukekohe branch of Stacey & Wass, land agents, until it closed.



**Barbara Littlewood**

Photo Diane Wymer

Her family later moved to Manurewa after selling their farm in Mauku. Initially they lived in Lupton Grove, then moved to Grand Vue Road.

While living in Manurewa, Barbara worked for a local doctor, Dr Witham.

On 14 November, 1951 Barbara married John Littlewood at St Luke's Church, Manurewa. They lived in Pukekohe until 1957 when they purchased a small farmlet in Weymouth where they lived for 33 years, raising their two children.

Barbara and John moved to Wattle Downs in 1989.

Barbara was a very practical person, milking cows and raising several hundred chickens each year. She also enjoyed attending hobby classes at night school - sewing, cake icing, floral art, pottery, cane and leather work, and card making. Later she became a keen china painter.

In later years, Barbara worked as a corsetier in Manurewa.

Barbara was very community minded. She was an active member of both the Manurewa and Weymouth Anglican Churches, regularly doing the flowers and being a member of the Young Wives Club.

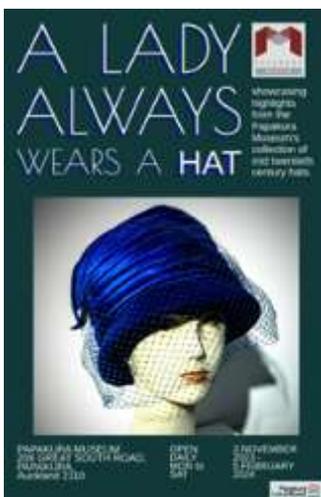
When a hotel was planned for the corner of Weymouth and Palmers Roads, she attended a liquor licence hearing to oppose the tavern. While she didn't enjoy attending the hearing, she felt it her duty to oppose this in the best interests of her community and mentioned that she learned a lot from the experience.

She was a lifetime member of the Manurewa Historical Society from its inauguration in 1981 until 2002. She served on the Committee until 1993. After suffering a stroke, she became a regular member of the Manurewa Stroke Club.

Eventually, she and John moved to Selwyn Oaks, Papakura. Barbara passed away in Papakura in 2016. At the time of her death, she had 6 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. Another 2 have arrived since.

A search of Manurewa Historical Society records revealed Joan and Barbara must have known each other as they were both on the Committee at the same time. Perhaps Joan's donation to the Papakura Museum in 2001 inspired that of Barbara in 2003?

## The Hats



### **A lady always wears a hat.**

In the first half of the twentieth century, a lady was expected to wear a hat and gloves whenever she left the house. A matching handbag was necessary to complete every well dressed woman's outfit. Hats were for both daytime and evening wear.

In the daytime, hats of all shapes and sizes were worn to church, weddings, funerals, christenings, luncheons, prize givings, civic occasions, meetings of women's groups such as the Country Women's Institute, shopping in Queen Street, and, of course, to the races. And hats were needed for every season - flower and ribbon decorated straw hats for summer, felt, fur, feather and wool hats for winter.

In the evening, small cocktail hats were the style of choice.

Hat wearing declined from the 1960s onwards. The younger generation wanted to be different from their mothers. Instead they styled their hair in elaborate “big hair” styles aided by the advent of hairspray.

## Style

Hats come in many different styles depending on what was fashionable at the time. For instance, the pill-box hat was frequently worn by style icon Jackie Kennedy in the early 1960s and enjoyed enormous popularity amongst women who aspired to her style.

Hat styles in the museum’s collection include the cloche (popular in the 1920s), turban, Breton, pill box, cartwheel, fedora, toque, floral cap, mushroom, dish, Cossack. Materials include real and fake fur, feathers, organza, straw, felt, satin, plush, and polyester.

All were the epitome of fashion at a particular period in the twentieth century. Many were copies of styles favoured by celebrities such as Audrey Hepburn and by the late Queen Elizabeth II.

## Hat makers

Some of the hats bear no manufacturer’s or retailer’s labels. Some may have been homemade. Shop-bought clothing was expensive so most women made their own and this sometimes included hat making. Women’s magazines often included articles on decorating and making hats.

Of the labelled hats in the Museum’s collections, the majority were made by New Zealand companies - Jacol, Peggy Vane, Josella, Jonlea. One was designed in Denmark and made in New Zealand under license ( Kama’s Silhouet hat).



**Jacoll Hat. Made in New Zealand**  
Toque in green synthetic pleated organza

There is one hat in the collection which is labelled “Mitzi Lorenz”. Mitzi was born in Vienna in 1911 and later apprenticed to a fashion house there. In 1936 she moved to England and began a millinery enterprise in 1938. Her hat shop was in Great Portland Street in London.



**Mitzi Lorenz, England**  
Cartwheel in navy and white fabric.

Import restrictions in this period meant that few finished hats could be imported and sold in New Zealand. The raw materials for making the hats could be imported however and this provided opportunities for New Zealand manufacturers and designers who had little or no competition from overseas. However, local hat makers were keenly aware of, and followed, overseas fashion trends.

## Papakura Retailers

There were a number of retailers in Papakura in the 1960s and 1970s where the fashionable lady could purchase her hats. There were milliners such as Olive May Hats (owner Olive Goodman) at 214 Great South Road and Trudy Hats at 2 O'Shannessey Street. Hats could also be purchased at ladies' fashion stores such as Fiesta Gowns, Le Reynard (owner Irene McQuinlan) and Gem Fashion Salon.

Department stores such as George Courts, Rendells and Farmers were another millinery source. "Peggy Vane" was a brand especially made for Rendells department store.



### **Peggy Vane model by Rendells of Auckland.**

Cap of lime-green net over organza, strewn with artificial roses of cream velour and organza. All materials are synthetic.

## Conclusion

Not all the hats could be put on display at this time. There are more that may be displayed at some future date, including those that have been donated as single items by other donors.

The museum is grateful for the donations of these very special items and to the family members who helped us with our research and supplied precious family photos and anecdotes that helped bring Joan's and Barbara's stories to life. Thanks to Joan's son Brian, her daughter Lee, her granddaughter Jenni, and her son-in-law, Bruce Shanks. Thanks also to Barbara's daughter, Diane.

Thanks are also due to Kara for her help and advice on mounting the exhibition.

## Trips (from page 17)

**February trip: Saturday 24 February —Pukekiwiriki and Rings Redoubt, leaving at 10.15 from East St carpark if you want a ride (or go directly to Pukekiwiriki on Red Hill Rd for 10.30 start), returning 12.00. Please note: The terrain is uneven and involves a climb up steps to the top, so participants must have a reasonable level of fitness and be able to climb the steps. Sturdy shoes eg boots, trainers, etc rather than sandals, jandals and bare feet recommended. Dress according to conditions on the day. A short visit to Rings Redoubt will follow, just to let people know where it is and have a quick look around. Please note: no food or drink at the pa site.**

**March trip: Saturday 23 March '24 11.30am - 2pm—Aroha Cottage. Meet at East St carpark by 11.00 if you want a ride, or drive direct to 140 Jesmond Rd by 11.30. Please note: Trip hosted by owner Greg Smith, who will talk about the cottage, some of the items inside, and his conservation work. He will provide tea and coffee. Bring water, lunch, sunblock, rug, cushion as appropriate. (There are seats.) A koha to Greg Smith for a conservation project he supports could be appreciated.**

**Both trips:** No cost but if travelling with someone else, a \$5 koha to the driver would be appropriate.

# A celebration of the life of Mr. William Hart

## (27th Feb 1931 – 8th Jan 2024)

will take place on Wednesday the 14th of February at 2pm. It will be held in the St. Johns Hall, 19 Ray Small Drive, Papakura.

William (Bill) was an active member and President for many years of the Papakura & District Historical Society. He and his brother Jack drove his buses on many of the outings for the society. Anyone who remembers William is welcome to come. There will be snacks and refreshments available.



# NOTICES

## MEETINGS: (held in the Papakura Library Meeting Room):

February 22, Thursday, at 1 pm: Alan Knowles, on The disappearance of an aircraft called Aotearoa, 1927

March 28, Thursday at 1 pm: James Duncan, on Auckland's trams

## MUSEUM TALKS bimonthly series in the Museum:

March 9, Saturday at 12.30 pm (note earlier time): Timothy Young, Pitcairn: a gem in the Pacific

## MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS:

*Old School Tech*, finishing February

*Violet's scarf* based on picture book by Colleen Brown— March to June

*Ring's Redoubt* is being set up this month in the Military Gallery.

**TRIPS:** see previous page and note below: Register your intention to come at February meeting, or ring Dave (phone number below) or—for Feb/ March trips—Rob (2984499)/ email: [pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz](mailto:pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz)

**Meetings** held on the fourth Thursday of each month in the Library Meeting Rooms opposite the Museum, the talk first at 1 pm, then business and afternoon tea provided by PDHS members (for \$2 gold coin). Phil Sai-Louie & PDHS arrange interesting speakers.

Museum Talks bi-monthly on a Saturday, 12.30pm.

**Events are advertised** here, on the screen in the Museum window and on our blog and Facebook pages. Please check for updates and Museum news.

**Trips** are usually held on the fourth Saturday of each month. Watch notices for transport arrangements and cost. Cost is \$5 more for non-members, but anyone is welcome on a first come first aboard basis. Please register early and advise if unable to attend as numbers are limited.

**To register for trips, please ring Dave at (09) 2984507**

### Visit Papakura Museum on

Website: [www.papakuramuseum.org.nz](http://www.papakuramuseum.org.nz)

Our blog: <https://papakuramuseumblog.wordpress.com>

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**The Papakura Sentinel is a bimonthly magazine of the Papakura & District Historical Society. Your contributions are welcomed. Please send directly to Rob by email: [pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz](mailto:pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz)**



The Papakura Museum & Sentinel are supported by





**Ad-space**

Papakura Heritage Walk is being planned for a Saturday in March, leaving Museum at 10 am.

To register, contact Rob at [pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz](mailto:pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz) or leave your name at the Museum desk, and we will get back to you.

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