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2025 has not wasted time making itself known. I’ve walked along the beach at Malibu, LA, between the sea and the line of beach houses whose owners wanted to make the beach private. On the road high fences and gates and elite cars. All gone. I’ve visited the Getty Centre which has been threatened more than once, and hope that it can withstand the next blaze as planned, and I’ve been driven—I would not attempt to drive—up the ridge where the fires have wreaked destruction. Syria has overthrown Assad, Trump, Musk and their buddies have taken the helm of the USA. Uncertain times. Things change, which is why we have histories, historians and Museums. But as Gaza and Ukrainian and Syrian cities remind us, physical memories are more vulnerable than stories, and as the USA reminds us, the best protected and best-intentioned institutions can end up at the mercy of vandals with obscene wealth, so moral courage is required too. Even in New Zealand there are those who wish to remove the accumulated wisdom of careful discussion over many years. Mutual respect, and valuing truth are the core values. Without them there can be no democracy, whatever technical provisions there might be. A vote every three or four years does not make a democracy. And without democracy might is right.

Thought I’d start with a moment of reflection before we pick ourselves up and carry on, more or less as usual.

Over the holiday period members of the Society and Museum have been busy, and in this issue we’ll report on some of what’s happening. And I like a good story, so the case of the Captain, the Cobbler and the Cow has been prepared for your delectation. No animals were harmed in writing the story. Welcome back, and read on. *Rob, ed*

**PAPAKURA & DISTRICT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Monthly Members’ Meetings: 4th Thurs, 1pm – 3pm
Regular 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

Wendy Deeming

This braille writer was owned by Shirley Herkt, who was blinded in an accident just before her 21st birthday.

The Light Brailleur, created in Japan, operated very differently than most braille writers. It moved sideways across the paper as braille was written. The brailleur was produced around 1950.



Braille, universally accepted system of writing used by and for blind persons, consisting of a code of 63 characters, each made up of one to six raised dots arranged in a six-position matrix or cell. The key configuration is vertical like the braille cell. Holes are punched not raised. The keyboard and carriage are combined and move from the right to the left. When the sheet is turned over, the dots face upward and are read from left to right using one or both hands. The soft pads of the fingers are used to feel the raised dots, as these are more sensitive than the fingertips.

Accession number 10042

Donated 7 August 2015

Changes afoot—Keeping in Touch

Members will have received the first and second issues of a new PDHS newsletter, *Keeping in touch*, emailed monthly to keep people up to date with Society and Museum events. Being monthly, this newsletter will provide notices closer to the time.

After this issue, which is unavoidably delayed, *Sentinel* will be a little shorter, consisting of research, memoirs and reviews relating mainly to the history of Papakura and neighbouring districts. As always, it will also remain the main vehicle for reporting on important PDHS and Museum business and events of broader interest, for a wider audience.

As always your editor, Rob Finlay, welcomes articles from readers. You might have interesting stories, memoirs, diary items, that you think readers would find interesting. Just send them to pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz or talk to me.

Society News and Events.

A message from our President, Margaret Gane

Greetings to all our PDHS members

Welcome to 2025! I hope that the New Year has begun well for you all.

As the Editor of the 'Sentinel', Rob has invited me to give a brief report about our status as an Incorporated Society and what is happening with our PDHS Constitution.

But first, some history!

PDHS registered as an Incorporated Society on 26 November 1962 and has remained one up until the present time.

A brief explanation about what an incorporated society is and what it means for its members can be found on the Companies Office website (is-register.companiesoffice.govt.nz)

and here are some extracts:-

'An incorporated society is a not-for-profit legal entity.....This gives a group its own legal identity.....'

Being incorporated also means the members are not personally liable for the society's debts or other obligations and cannot have a personal interest in any property or assets owned by the society...

Forming a corporation allows you to: Secure your assets' [2 Dec 2022]

'To become incorporated each society must have a constitution that complies with the Incorporated Societies Act 2022. The constitution sets out your society's purposes, what it does and how it operates. This provides certainty and consistency in the way your society is run.'

'Recent Developments to do with Incorporated Societies

On 5 April 2022, the Government passed new legislation called 'The Incorporated Societies Act 2022' and the 'Incorporated Societies Regulations 2023' (The Regulations) came into force on 5 October 2023. Together, these put in place a modern legal, governance and accountability framework for incorporated societies and those who run them.

All groups that are currently Incorporated Societies must re-register if they wish to remain incorporated and they have until 5 April 2026 in which to get this done!

There was no question about us not remaining an incorporated society so the Executive formed a sub committee last year to attend to this task.

Since then, 6 members led by Brian Leonard have been hard at work rewriting, revisiting and reviewing the document and in the near future, we shall be letting our Honorary Solicitor, Matt Shirley have a final look at it.

When all concerned are completely happy with the final version, the Executive will call a Special General Meeting for all members to attend. At that meeting, you will have the opportunity to ask questions and request clarification on any part of the constitution before we put it to the meeting to have the document ratified.

PS. You will receive a copy of the proposed constitution before the meeting so that you can read it and come prepared.

It is vitally important that you make every effort to attend because our constitution governs the way in which PDHS operates! (see above)

I look forward to seeing you there when we announce the date!

Margaret Gane (President, PDHS)

PDHS Website

Last year, the Executive Committee decided to move forward with exploring the feasibility of setting up a website for the PDHS. (Readers will know there is already a website for Papakura Museum: <https://www.papakuramuseum.org.nz/>). A website sub-committee was formed, consisting of Rob Finlay, Christine Muir, Margaret Gane, Alan Knowles, and Wendy Gibson.

Aims of the Website:

- To establish an identity for the PDHS.
- To attract and engage new members to the Society.
- To connect people with the history of Papakura.

We obtained three quotes from website designers and ultimately chose Webbi Digital Studio, who designed the website for the Nelson Historical Society (www.nelsonhistoricalsociety.org.nz). This website was selected as a model, as it closely aligned with the look and feel we envisioned for the PDHS site.

We are currently in the process of designing and developing the website and will keep our members updated on its progress. Many thanks to the website sub-committee for their contributions so far.

Wendy Gibson

Website Sub-Committee

Forthcoming PDHS meetings:

(Held in Library Meeting Room at 1 pm, followed by afternoon tea—anyone welcome. \$2 towards afternoon tea,)

27 March: Tessa Duder: Auckland's founding 1840—a neglected story.

24 April: Herb Dreher: Growing up in a German village during World War II

22 May: James Duncan: Auckland trams.

Trips:

PDHS March Trip to Waiuku - Saturday 29 March '25

Organiser - Margaret Gane, (margaretigane@gmail.com OR 022 158 8064)

Transport - Carpooling from Library Carpark from 9.30am. \$5 koha each for the driver

Destination - Waiuku

Programme

Morning - 10.45am - 11.45am. Sailing on the 'Ratahi'. Cost - \$45 per adult

Enjoy a Devonshire tea on board along with an interesting commentary.

Lunch from 11.45am - 12.45pm - Cafe of your choice OR bring your own lunch. Make your own arrangements.

Afternoon - 1pm - 1.45pm. Visit to Waiuku Museum. Cost -\$7pp

2pm - 2.40pm OPTIONAL - Titanomagnetite Experience (Approx. 40mins)

Venue - 'The View Waiuku', 11 King Street, Waiuku

(Create stunning sculptures and furry creatures using the magnetic properties of the crystal Titanomagnetite, found in abundance on our west coast Karioitahi Beach. Learn the history of how the crystal came to be on the beach, and its significance for our local community.

Cost - Adult \$9)

Deadline for Numbers was on Monday 3 March.

Papakura Museum Update

Alan Knowles (Curator)

Rob has asked me to report on some of the exciting things that will be happening in the Museum this year, so where do I begin?

The **Military Gallery** will be getting another revamp with the installation of new exhibits and displays:

- The New Zealand (Pioneer) Māori Battalion that served in WWI,
- The Cadet movement ,
- The Korean conflict and
- Papakura local Theo Thomas.

A major project that has been in the works for some time is a **dedicated space for local iwi** which will tell the story of Te Aakitai Waiohua, Ngaati Te Ata Waiohua and Ngāti Tamaoho. This display will

be set up in full partnership with all iwi and will borrow the concept that Te Papa has instigated within its museum called Mana Taonga. Mana Taonga is the cornerstone and guiding principle for Te Papa, and at its very foundation is the recognition that there are living relationships and connections between taonga (treasures/ artefacts) and their cultures of origin. The Mana Taonga concept acknowledges that communities have rights to their taonga by virtue of these relationships. It acknowledges the role of communities in the care and management of Taonga and the willingness to engage as well as mediate in new ways. Mana Taonga is central to Māori participation and involvement, and in a very tangible way it connects iwi to the museum via the whakapapa or genealogical relationships of taonga and its knowledge. The principle places people at the heart of the museum as a way of focusing on what's important within the contemporary world, and so ensures that the museum remains relevant and connected with its communities. The mana whenua space within Papakura Museum will use the Mana Taonga concept as a guide that will connect taonga with the local iwi of Papakura. The taonga on display, and associated stories will be selected and told by local iwi and rotated regularly.

This will truly put Papakura Museum at the forefront of museum practice, keep the Museum displays fresh and provide a meaningful as well as tangible connection for local iwi. The museum is slowly curating the galleries to be more immersive and interactive. The PDHS in conjunction with the Museum has been working on a Papakura Heritage Map with Te Aakitai Waiohua, Ngaati Te Ata Waiohua and Ngāti Tamaoho: this will feature a selection of local historic sites that can be visited and should be available in the second half of this year.

Exhibitions: We have multiple exhibitions in the works for this year. On display at the moment is *All Ablaze*, the history of firefighting in Papakura, commemorating one hundred years of the Papakura Fire Brigade. It will run between February and April. The *Papakura—Now and Then* photographic exhibition is also starting the year off. (A sample of the images is shown on pages 15—17.)

The *Anzac* period will feature military artwork and sculptures from the Greg Moyle collection followed by a major exhibition of *music* featuring the collection of Rob Turner (many items of which will be on display for the first time). The regular *Matariki* exhibition will this year be curated by Te Aakitai Waiohua.

Bloodstock - a history of horse racing and breeding in the district, *HerStory* - which profiles local women, the settlement of *Kirikiri* which accompanies Rob Finlay's upcoming book on the early Papakura settlement and an exhibition on *vintage videogames* curated by museum volunteer Anthony Gayner, will all be in the second half of this year.

Talks: The museum will be hosting bimonthly Saturday afternoon talks starting with Brian McDonnell on March 8th. See notice below.

The museum will be open on **Anzac Day morning** again this year and as always, we will have our **Science Open Day** complete with experiments, a hoverboard and bottle rockets!

Managing the museum's collections is vital ongoing work which goes unseen by the public.

Over the past eighteen months a collection review has been undertaken which involves systematically going through the storage area and ensuring that the artefacts are properly housed and accessioned and located in the correct area. Items deemed to be of no relevance to the Museum are being disposed of in an appropriate manner. The museum has a major focus on the digitisation of the collection and eventually making this available online. This will be gradual work, and we are in the process of purchasing scanning equipment then we can get to work on scanning the thousands of images we have!

2025 is shaping up to be another great year! As always, I wish to thank the Papakura Museum staff and volunteers for all they do.

First Museum Talk for 2025:

Saturday 8 March, 12.30.

Dr Brian McDonnell will speak on the US Camps in Auckland during World War II, with a focus on South Auckland.

All welcome. Entry \$5, \$2 for PDHS members

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The Captain, the Cobbler and the Cow

A story about crossing boundaries

Rob Finlay

The Captain had a convict father and a Victoria Cross

Charles Pye was born in 1820, was an officer in the Colonial Defence Force during the New Zealand Wars, lived in Papakura during the 1860s, and died in Australia in 1876.

Almost ho hum.

But there are some surprises in his story. He had humble origins: his father, a labourer in Staffordshire and then a brickmaker in Birmingham, was arrested for theft of “16 geese, 6 ducks, 1 drake, and one pair of tent bedsteads” (*Trove*, citing *Staffordshire Advertiser* 26/3/1836) and again a few months later for an armed burglary with two other men (*Trove*, from *London Evening Standard*, 22/7/1836). His death sentence was commuted to transportation to Australia as a convict in 1837, and he disappeared from 16-year-old Charles’ life. His mother having died, he was brought up by an uncle and aunt in Staffordshire and had a good education. He joined the army and became an officer, was awarded a VC during his time in India, was struck by a Sergeant in Auckland and one of his animals was speared. A district was named after him, and he returned to live with his convict father in Australia, where he died.

He seems to have charmed those who knew him, yet some reacted against him.

In 1840 he enlisted in Coventry, Warwickshire, before being sent to India with the 40th Regiment. He was present at the battle of Maharajpooor (during the Gwalior Campaign against the martial Marathas) in December 1843. In the next year he transferred into the 21st Foot. He was involved in the First Anglo-Sikh War in 1845 – 1846, and, after joining the 53th Regiment, took part in the Second Anglo Sikh War in 1848 – 1849 in the Punjab and the North-West Frontier, which resulted in British control of those regions.

When the “Indian Mutiny” (known in India today as the First War of Independence) broke out in May 1857, his unit was involved. On 17 November 1857, when he was a Sergeant-Major, he was elected for the Victoria Cross by his fellow non-commissioned officers arising from action at Lucknow.

“Pye’s Victoria Cross was another of those awarded as a result of a ballot of his comrades, allowed according to the unusual Rule 13 of the V.C. Warrant - where a number of men displayed equal gallantry, those who were present in the action could choose amongst themselves who was to receive the award.” (*Soldiers of Shropshire*) This was an honour awarded to his unit, and it is a



Victoria Cross awarded to Ensign Charles Pye, 53rd Regiment, Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira, 657333



Other service medals mainly relate to Indian campaigns.

Auckland Museum

measure of respect among his fellow NCOs that they chose him to be the recipient of the medal. The citation mentions “steadiness and fearless conduct under fire... when bringing up ammunition to the Mess House, and on every occasion when the Regiment has been engaged.” He was promoted to Corporal in 1858, became an adjutant in 1859, and was promoted to Ensign (a full officer rank) in April 1860, without purchase; in other words on merit and with the approval of his officers.

While in India he had married the widow of another soldier, Mary Ann Farrell, becoming stepfather to her children. The family left India with the 58th on 16 April 1860 for England, where he gained the rank of Lieutenant, and then, in 1862, he took his discharge and emigrated to New Zealand with his wife and stepdaughter Catherine. It appears they first settled in Howick. He is one of fourteen Victoria Cross recipients who earned their medals in other armies but lived in New Zealand.

The Taranaki War had already begun, and the colony was heading towards the Waikato War, which began in July 1863. With his military experience, Charles Pye was appointed a Captain of the Auckland Militia in July 1863, and then became a Captain in the Colonial Defence Force. On the march down to Papakura he was struck by Quartermaster Sergeant Robinson, who was held at Otahuhu pending a court martial. (*DSC 25/8/63*) In the absence of details we can only speculate. After serving in the Waikato and Waipa, he was sent down to Tauranga and served at Hairini and Te Ranga. Again, he earned the respect of his fellow officers, and Pyes Pa, where there was a blockhouse, was named in his honour.

When the main conflicts in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty came to an end, Pye and the Colonial Defence Force were stationed at Papakura, although he also spent time in Ngaruawahia and elsewhere in the Waikato, as the situation remained tense for a while. In that capacity he took a party of ten men and a sergeant to Te Awamutu in December 1864. (*NZr 7/1/65*) He made a claim to the Compensation Court for “losses sustained during the native rebellion (sic)” at Howick for £160, a fairly significant amount. In his final award, the Commissioner of the Compensation Court disallowed an earlier award of £139: “Claim disallowed on the ground that the claimant was merely away from his home on duty as a militiaman, and not driven away by the rebel natives.” (*DSC 22/4/1865, 5/9/1866.*)

The Colonial Defence Force was disbanded in 1866.

Pye invested in Papakura. He bought land, on Young's peninsula on which he built a home and ran a small farm, but he also built four cottages, which came to the attention of the *New Zealand Herald* on 11 February 1865. (Extract below. From Papers Past, NLNZ)

lands This village is looking on the improvement sea & just now. Captain Pye's four cottages are completed and ready for occupying. They are exceedingly pretty dwelling-houses, each containing one front, sitting and bed-room, as well as a large kitchen and sitting room. They are well painted and papered. There is a water spout along the one, and the water is conveyed by that means into large iron tanks erected at the rear of each occupant's back door. There is also a large verandah and space for a nice flower garden in front as well as ground for a vegetable garden in rear. Captain Pye is about putting up palisading in front and about sinking two wells for the use of the occupants, and when these little matters are completed they will be an ornament to our village. The entire cost cannot be less than £1200.

The contractor was Mr. Goodall, who has completed his agreement to Captain Pye's entire satisfaction.

He also became involved in the local community. He was one of those who rallied Papakura settlers to build a wharf at Chalky Point in 1865-66. Also in 1865 he lent a team of horses to a Mr John Smith at 30 shillings a day to deliver piles for the Drury bridge. Smith had the horses for two and a half days, and Charles Croucher was working for him. Two years later Pye took Smith to court for his payment, armed with a certificate of discharge for bankruptcy, and won his claim for £3.15.

And he made the acquaintance of John Halloran, who it appears occupied one of his cottages.

The combative cobbler and the cow who liked cabbage

John Halloran was probably a former soldier or seaman who set up as a shoemaker in Papakura. He may have been the sailmaker who caused a disturbance at the "Māori house, Beach Road" in Mechanics Bay reported by *The Colonist* in 31/11/1865. He took up one of the Kirikiri 10 acre blocks, after John Dick, a single man who emigrated on the *Viola*, had surrendered it, and he had built a cottage either there or on a village section. But in July 1866 John Halloran's cottage, insured and mortgaged, burned down.

Two years later it seems he was living in one of Pye's cottages in the village. He was a keen gardener and often featured in the Agricultural Association events, winning prizes for his produce. In March 1866, John Halloran won a prize for 5 stalks of green maize and a plate of apples, and this was not the only time.

But gardening brought its challenges.

A story unfolded before Charles Mellsop, Esq. RM, at Papakura's Resident Magistrate's Court, Papakura, in July 1867. John Halloran, plaintiff, claimed £1.12s (\$3.20) from Charles Pye for damage to his garden by Pye's cow. He had lost cabbages and cabbage plants, parsley and other crops, and fruit trees had been damaged. Mrs Ann Halloran witnessed her husband chasing a red cow up to Captain Pye's on the 21st. On Sunday the 21st Halloran had got up before daylight and had seen the cow in his garden. He had taken a stick and followed her to see where she came in. She had pushed her way through the fence straight to Pye's place. He had complained to Pye,

who acknowledged it was his cow. Pye came over and told him if he would send his children over he would give them some cabbages to compensate. The cow had trespassed again on the Monday and the Wednesday. On the 20th Mrs Ann Halloran had seen Captain Pye preventing the cow from getting in. She had seen the cow eating koromiko and other herbage in the hedge, and her husband had pointed out hoof marks where the cow had been in his garden.

Pye admitted he owned the cow, but questioned the amount claimed. The discussion got heated; when Halloran threatened the law Pye warned that that might be unwise. Most of the case depended on assessments of damage. At one stage Halloran spoke of 5000 cabbages (unless the reporter heard wrongly), presumably seedlings. Two people present in support assessed the damage at 20 and 25 shillings (\$2-\$2.50), and described the beds as 12-14 feet long and 8-9 feet broad (4x3 metres). They felt the garden was well-secured, although "a horse or cow might push through." But the court also heard from two others, Napp who assessed damages at 4-5 shillings, and Grey at 6-7 shillings. In addition, Napp offered that Halloran had threatened vengeance on any person attempting to give evidence for the defendant. (*DSC 31/7/67*). Judgement was given to the plaintiff for 12 shillings and costs. It is possible that neither was happy.)

That may not have been the end of the matter. Two and a half months later, in October, the *Daily Southern Cross* reported on a "wanton and brutal outrage". Charles Pye had returned from an overnight trip to Auckland to find that a valuable cow, in full milk, value of about \$20 in an enclosed paddock to the rear of the house appeared to be dying. She had been stabbed nearly through her body with a spear, probably a gum spear. She had to be destroyed.

Papakura people were concerned. On the previous night, someone had broken the windows of the Presbyterian church and George Cole's house. The comment was made that this was "not the first occurrence of the kind in the neighbourhood of Papakura, where cattle have before now been hamstringed or haughed". (*N Z Herald 19/10/1867, Daily Southern Cross 19/10/1867*)

The reputation of Papakura suffered. The story was picked up by the *Wellington Independent*, 5/11/1867, which reported:

"**Drury** - There must be some great scoundrels in Drury, Auckland. A valuable cow, worth £20, the property of Captain Pye, has been wantonly killed by some person unknown; and window breaking of churches and private houses, seem to be a regular practice here."

It is possible that the crime wave involved more than one person, and it may be unfair to finger Halloran with events. There was one unnamed suspect with the stone-throwing, and in the previous year there had been talk among immigrants from the Thirteen Ships of hamstringing the cattle of settlers. But it is possible Halloran could have found a degree of satisfaction in the injury to Pye's cow.

In the meantime, Halloran had also fallen out with his professional competition. It would be intriguing to know what allegations had been made—why do we always miss the juicy allegations in these newspaper accounts? - and also what pressure had been brought to bear to elicit the apology and recantation printed in the *New Zealand Herald* on Christmas Day of the next year.

I JOHN BROWN, of Papakura, shoemaker, do hereby apologise to Mr. John Halloran, of the same place, shoemaker, for the slanders uttered by me on the 30th November, 1868, in respect to him; and I acknowledge that all the statements made by me on that occasion are false.
Auckland, 24th December, 1868.
JOHN BROWN.
Witness—A. BROCK.

New Zealand Herald 25/12/1868

That is the last we hear of John Halloran and his family.

Charles and Mary Ann Pye had also left Papakura, presumably selling the land to Young. Like so many others, Charles caught gold fever, and moved to Karaka Hill, Shortland, Thames. He took out a miner's right in November 1867 and another in June 1868: the latter must have shown gold because he lodged a couple of claims later in the month in Karaka Creek, and soon after took out a miner's right at Tararu as well. As late as March 1872 he opened another claim in Karaka North. He owned the Duke of Edinburgh goldmine but was "later led into speculating and lost heavily". (Wikipedia article and <https://kaelewis.com/database/>) Since the Gold Rush had peaked in 1872, he was one of many who ended up doing badly.

By 1875, after forty years, he had discovered his father's whereabouts in Australia. The former convict had settled near Koroit in the Warrnambool area of Victoria, had remarried and had a new family and a farm. In that year Charles sailed to Australia, travelling to Kirkstall, Victoria, Australia and purchased part of his father's farm in 1876, perhaps because his father was in financial straits. A month later he died on 12 July 1876 of bronchitis. He was intestate, and his assets were lost to the family. He is buried in the same cemetery as his three half- brothers.

Mary Ann Pye died at her son-in-law's home at Mangere on 31 December 1900 and is buried at the Mangere cemetery with her daughter and grandchildren.

Charles Pye's medals were donated to the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

There is a moral to most stories:

Charles Pye reminds us that busts follow booms and going to Australia can be bad for your health.

John Halloran learned that good fences or hedges make good neighbours.

For the cow: grass is recommended over cabbage.

Crossing boundaries may bring opportunities but may also cause conflict.

Postscript:

The other interesting person in this story is Charles' father Thomas. In Australia he "was assigned as a convict to Captain Sylvester Brown, who later moved to Melbourne. A few years later Thomas was employed by Captain Brown's son, Thomas Browne, who became well known for his novels

under the name of Ralph Boldrewood, including "Robbery Under Arms" and "Old Melbourne Memories". Thomas Pye featured in the later novel as "Joe Burge" and a very interesting life was revealed." (<http://members.iinet.net.au/~perthdps/convicts/con129.htm>)

Sources:

NZ History, <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/sites/default/files/documents/vc-citations/charles-pye-vc.pdf>
<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/page/victoria-cross-recipient-nz-connection>

Soldiers of Shropshire, <https://www.soldiersofshropshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Charles-Pye-VC-word.pdf>

Trove - National Library of Australia, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-1444226091/view>

Auckland Museum, <https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C136355>

Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Pye

Goldrush online Thames records, <https://kaelewis.com/database/>

That was Pye, then there was Nye

George Nye.

At the same time as Charles Pye was one of Papakura's entrepreneurial gentry, George Nye was also living in Papakura engaged in business. Papakura was still only a rural village, although the rural population was growing fast. But did it need two general stores? Robert Willis seemed to cover the range of goods pretty well.

BRIGHTON HOUSE, PAPA KURA.
 GEORGE NYE
 BEGS to inform the inhabitants of Papakura and the public generally that he has taken the above-mentioned premises, and will shortly be prepared to supply them with every necessary article of CLOTHING and PROVISIONS, all of the best Quality, and at the Lowest Prices.
 G.N. also gives the best Price for good Clean Gum.
 GEORGE NYE,
 BRIGHTON HOUSE,
 PAPA KURA.

George Nye announced his presence in Papakura in an ad in the *Daily Southern Cross* late in 1866. His shop had the seemingly pretentious name of Brighton House. "Clothing and provisions" would appear to make his store pretty general. He also advertised that he would buy gum. (DSC 1//11/1866, 30/10/66.)

On the same day in August 1867 that Pye took his case against John Smith, before Captain Mell-sop, RM, so did Nye. He claimed 17 shillings, 3 and a half pence for goods supplies to Smith, and won his case.

In fact, Nye's affairs dominated the news from that day's court proceedings. Two separate charges portray a scene of chaos in Brighton House. In the first Nye claimed against an employee, Robert

Gillis, whom he had left in charge of his store while he went to Auckland overnight, for stealing £1. The second brought by Constable Thomas Campbell, *Viola* settler, against Thomas Mannerly, revealed a drunken riot. Picture the scene.

Nye has gone to Auckland for the day, leaving in charge Gillis, who has been in Nye's employment since January. Before leaving he has left Gillis with a half-sovereign and four half crowns to give to Mr Falwell, chemist. On his return in the wee small hours of Sunday morning, he finds the place in a "disgraceful condition, the prisoner was beastly drunk; things were broken and strewn about, and a number of things were missing. I went to the prisoner and tried to rouse him up, and when he got round a little I asked him for the day's drawings: he gave me 7s 6d." But there is nothing recorded in the book. Nye turfs him out, and when he discovers later that the money had not been paid to Falwell goes to the police.

The police know all about the matter already. In fact Thomas Campbell has the wounds to show it. Campbell deposes that "I was told to go and see after Mr Nye's store, as the man in charge was drunk. I went and found a number of men in the shop. The man in charge was entirely incapable of minding anything." With him in the back room is Thomas Mannerly. Campbell sets out to "clear the place and bolt the doors, and (told Mannerly) that no one would get anything till Mr Nye ... came home. All then left" except Mannerly, but Campbell manages to get him out and bolts the doors. "He, however, came back again, and finding the door bolted, he burst it open with his fist and came in." Again Campbell tries to put him out, but this time Mannerly "turned round and took hold of me by the breast saying 'are you a stronger man than me and' and gave me a blow" on first the left, and then on the right cheek, cutting him. (Campbell, though a good Christian, is not deliberately offering the other cheek.) "I then put him down, and put the handcuffs on him, and brought him to the lock-up. He was a good deal the worse of drink."

Backed by a witness, Campbell assures the prisoner that he has been restrained in his handling.

Prisoner, we are told, was fined £2 and court costs, or one month's imprisonment with hard labour. (These events were reported by both *Daily Southern Cross* and the *NZ Herald* in 21/8/1867.)

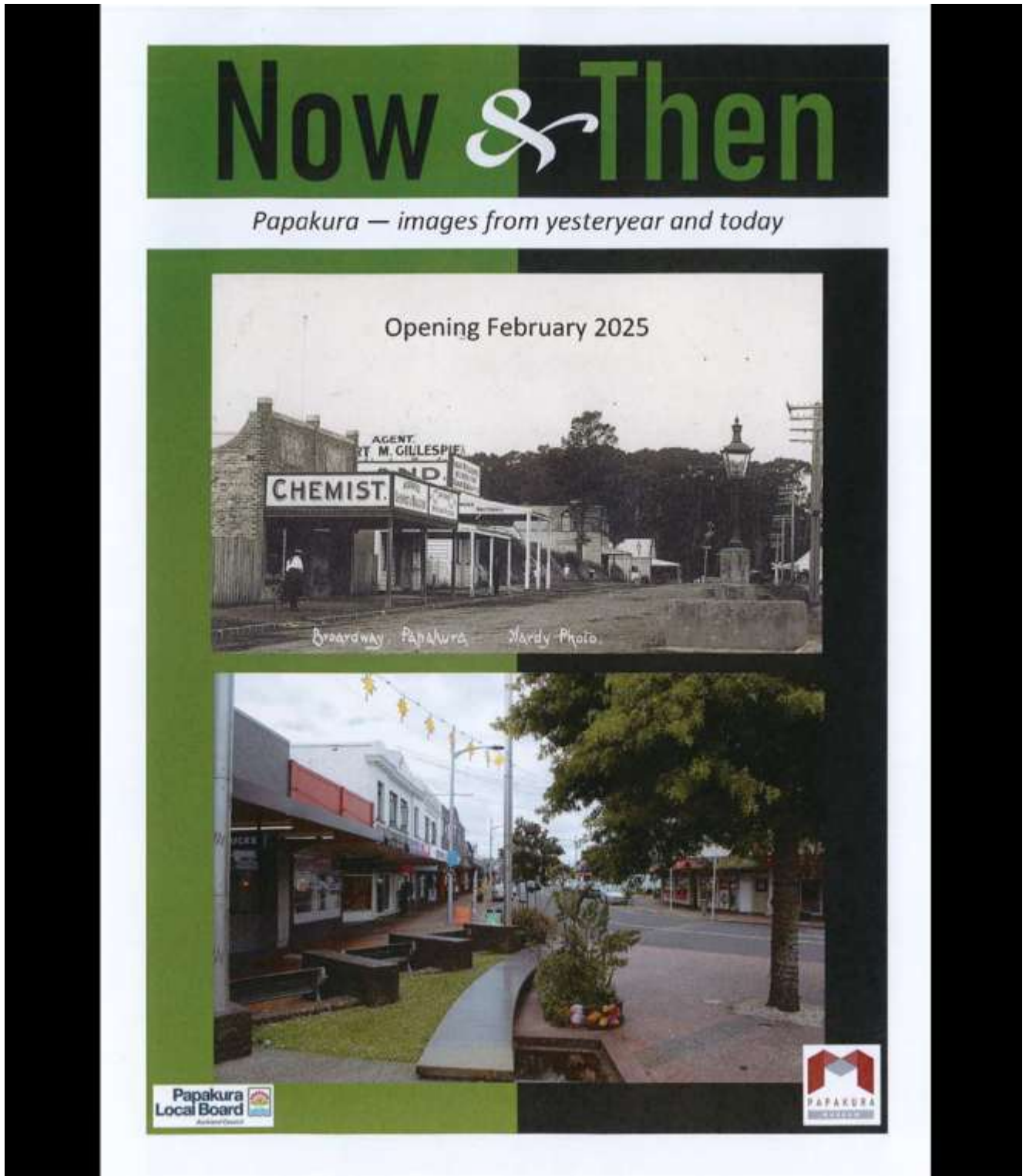
In February 1867 Nye was advertising for the return of a pocket book with £11 lost between Otahuhu and Papakura. In May 1867 John Clarkson admitted a claim of £5 13s 3 1/2d for goods provided by Nye.

George Nye, of Papakura, has been arrested upon the information of Mr. G. G. Walker, storekeeper, charged with embezzlement. He will be taken before the Papakura Bench on Friday next to answer to the charge.

By April 1868, he was licensee at Port Russell Hotel, Mercer, but his links with Papakura were not finished. In mid-1872 he was charged with embezzlement before the same Papakura Court. (*DSC* 18/6/1872)

This appears to be the last reference to him in Papakura area. By 1880, George Nye is in Foxton.

Current exhibition Papakura Museum



Some images, and the poster, above, from the current exhibition in Papakura Museum, that has arisen from intense local interest shared in the Museum Facebook.

100 years separates the two images above taken at the Great South Road and Broadway, formerly Station Road, intersection.



NOW. Above: Anglican Church 2025.



THEN. Right: Anglican Church 1905.



THEN. Above: Great South Road, looking north. Note concrete strip down the middle of the road, hence photo taken after 1927.

Right: same view NOW.





NOW. Above: Z petrol station, Papakura, 2024.

THEN. Right: Creamery, c 1910.

All photos:

Papakura Museum



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). PDHS members arrange interesting speakers.

Museum Talks periodically on Saturday afternoons.

Events are advertised here, on the screen in the Museum window and on our blog and Facebook

Trips are usually held monthly except during winter. 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 may be limited.

To register for trips, please ring Dave at (09) 2984507. Please register early.

Visit Papakura Museum on

Website: www.papakuramuseum.org.nz

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



The Papakura Museum & Sentinel are supported by

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



When, in 1870, Prince Alfred visits Auckland, Police Sergeant Patrick Kelly is put in charge of protecting Tom, the prince’s baby elephant. When Fenians intent on assassination arrive, Kelly unexpectedly finds himself in the thick of the action. Tom also lends a trunk.

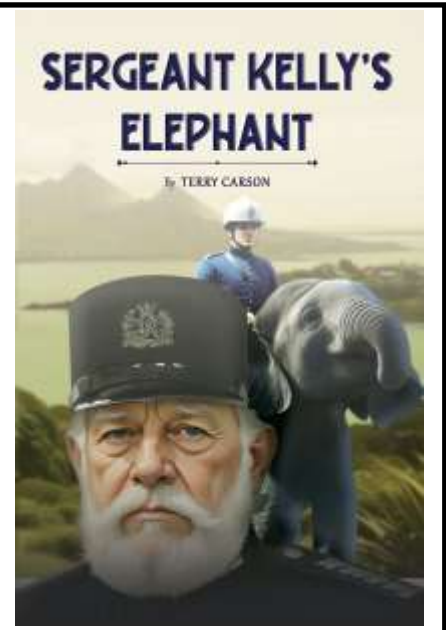
This new novel written by Terry Carson can be obtained from www.alibipress.co.nz, or as an e-book from Amazon KDP, Smashwords, Kobo, and all the major e-book distributors.

Or just ask Terry the next time you see him.

A great Christmas Present! Prepare for December 2025. (Ed)

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