



Hokianga Historical Society Inc.

PO Box 26 Opononi 0445

Ph. 09 405 8498

Incorporating
Hokianga Museum

NEWSLETTER FOR JUNE 2013

This will be short and possibly sweet, though I won't promise that. Mainly, it's coming out because we have had to change a few dates and the first one is for a happening at the end of this month. I know it's late to be telling you, but believe me, I've been trying to get this out for two weeks now and there's always been something.

However! This month brings the shortest day, and Matariki, and winter, and therefore the start of our winter series "SUNDAY AFTERNOONS IN THE MUSEUM". As you might know, the museum is closed on Sundays, but on the last Sunday of each winter month we will open up at 2 p.m. and invite a local speaker to talk about his/her passion, or past, or propensity to anyone who drops in.

Then we will have a cup of tea (or instant) and a biscuit and go home before it gets too cold. Well, we did it last year and it was a success, so we're trying it again. In our last newsletter the first session was laid down for 23rd June. This has been found to clash with a comparatively rare Arts Council presentation, also at 2 pm - and the last Sunday of the month is, in fact, June 30th. So please cross out the 23rd, and note that: On 30th June at 2 p.m., Noel Hilliam will be in the Museum talking about Digging up Shipwrecks. At least, that is what we have suggested he talks about; with Noel, a drift to any other topic is always on the cards.

Our July date remains, I trust, at Sunday the 28th. For this one we have asked Nick Williams of Rawene to describe the family he comes from and their life on the water - Hokianga water, that is. As the museum's featured exhibition at that time will be "Travelling on the Water" or 'When the river was the road' there should be quite a neat tie-up.

Our second date-change will come in August. This is always the month of our AGM and with AGMs the latest possible date is usually the best to go for, what with auditing and annual reports and elections and so forth. So we had been looking at the 25th and that was the date given in the previous newsletter. But the 25th, we have since learned, is the day when Kohukohu unveils a memorial to Private Richard Harris, killed in Afghanistan: it will be a big event with many of our members planning to attend. So our AGM will be brought forward - but whether it will be a day earlier, on Saturday 24th, or a week, ie Sunday 18th, is still to be decided. We will let you know for sure in good time - Being the AGM there will have to be a mailing well before it with election papers, and also potential Constitution changes for you to chew over, to go out.

However, we do have a speaker to lighten the atmosphere: Mita Harris, property manager for Historic Places Trust Northern. He has an enormous enthusiasm for his job and has been very involved in the development of the cycleway, among other preoccupations. As with most Harrises, and that includes Richard Harris mentioned above, he descends from the elusive Christopher Harris of the early days.

Finally, September 29th, the last of our winter Sunday Afternoons. (After all, the daffodils will be out by then) So far though it's another 'Watch this Space' as we are hoping to hear Steven King on Kauri Dieback, but he is exceedingly elusive, we haven't managed to make contact yet. Any volunteers, or suggestions, to take his place if necessary?

On another note entirely: we celebrated the local Branch's 40th anniversary on a very wet and cold Sunday afternoon. It was therefore a quiet success with small numbers but a lot of food - and it was just lovely to catch up with those who managed to be there! Our prize cake-maker Jean Garriock rose to the occasion with a beautifully decorated cake (not bad for an 85 year-old, she said modestly) of which we did have a photograph. I had planned to include it but alas, it somehow got lost between the camera and the computer. (Cameras delete too easily). We will do better in 2015, when it's the fiftieth birthday of the Historical Society proper. So get ready, Jean!

And news of Opo: she is now sitting in the museum, very much large as life, as from 23rd May. The big shift was made in one day by as many able-bodied men as could be mustered, under the supervision of Rose Evans, the Objects Conservator provided by Te Papa. No photo yet: Opo's plinth is still waiting to be enclosed - currently a pretty pink tanned frame - so she is not really photogenic yet. But watch this space! And I am running out of space on this page so - a happy winter to all, and Keep Healthy! I'll be in touch again soon, there's lots more happening.

Alexa Whaley.