

Incorporating  
Hokianga Museum & Archive Centre

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## NEWSLETTER JUNE 2019

As ever, this letter should have been on the way at the beginning of the month, but as ever, it's a race to get it finished and out by the end instead. It would be very nice to be an organised, done-in good-time sort of person, but at my age, it's probably too late.

However: others have been organised and there are a number of items to tell you about.

The most imminent is the launch of our coming exhibition, **a fresh look at the Dog Tax War**. That event covered less than a week, 121 years ago, but it has never been forgotten and now Auckland Library's digitising of Charlie Dawes' photographs can add a further dimension. We did already have some of his better-known photographs in our collection from other sources, but the digitised result, possibly from the slides themselves and including many more, is just amazing. The exhibition's curator, Sandy Clark, has been working on her display for a long time but the advent of such a store of new material has left her gasping for air.

The exhibition will be mounted in time for the next school holidays and after; how long will depend on its popularity. Probably the most eye-catching part will be the photography. But Sandy has tried to present all sides of the story, discovering with interest just how many differing viewpoints were expressed by onlookers and participants.

(A note about Charlie Dawes. He lived in Kohukohu in his early life and later became a farmer, but about 1890 when photography became easier with mail-order catalogues supplying all necessary materials, he and a number of friends – including Punakitere's William Gordon Jones – took it up enthusiastically and experimented together. Early in the 1890s the NZ Graphic began holding competitions for amateur photographers and publishing the winners' results; Charlie Dawes featured frequently. The NZ Herald also used his work once they had begun reproducing photographs. Much, much later, well after his death, quantities of his slides were found in the basement of his derelict house, many smashed or used as ashtrays by itinerants – rescued by collector Ben Te Wake who eventually passed them on to the Northern Advocate. Others had become the property of the MP of the time, H.N. Austin.

To follow the Dog Tax, there are plans for something quite different – going from violence to 'the food of love' perhaps. In September we will mount **Music in the Hokianga**. Once that idea was mooted all sorts of memories and suggestions came to the surface – from the 'ruriruri' John Webster described in 1846, through the passion for brass bands in Kohukohu, Rawene and Waimamaku, the dance bands and pianists for all those local balls (the Pokas brothers?) right up to the present-day singers, composers and entertainers that Hokianga is busy producing. Plus of course the kapa haka groups in our schools – really, there's no end to it! Dale Bradley Page is curating this exhibition and welcomes input. But there's a particular **request** here. We have some vinyl records, but nothing to play them on. Would anyone have a **spare record player (ideally 1960s vintage) that the museum could borrow for the duration of the programme?** We'd be glad to hear from you – please ring Dale Bradley-Page ph 022 109 8741 or email [hokiangaahs@gmail.com](mailto:hokiangaahs@gmail.com) if so.

**Another date:** With 30<sup>th</sup> June being the end of our financial year, the **AGM** is starting to rear its head again, with all positions up for grabs. The date will be **August 18<sup>th</sup>** so there is a month or so to be thinking about it. Nomination forms will be attached to the next newsletter, but they do have to reach the Secretary a week before (i.e. August 11<sup>th</sup>)

And a further date to look forward to – our annual **Christmas Lunch**, which we've booked for **Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> November**. It will be at the **Opononi Hotel** (you might guess we quite like it as a venue!) and our speaker will be **Dr Aroha Harris** (Te Rarawa and Ngapuhi) She has kindly agreed to speak, but would like more time to decide on her topic – which is fine by us so early in the piece. Among other activities, she was one of the editors and contributors to *Tangata Whenua: an Illustrated History* which appeared to great acclaim in 2014. As well as being a top-notch researcher and presenter, she's a lovely warm person. More detail about the lunch will come in the next newsletter and the one after that, but the date is secured.

Talking of dates – congratulations to **Olive Harris**, creator of *Remember the Hokianga* and *Both sides of the River* – her ninetieth birthday is just coming up .and she's kicking up her heels.

**Staffing the Museum:** Our most recent volunteers, John Brown, Rebecca Chou, Kathryn Darby and Vivienne Davies are already using their range of skills on the job. Now we have one more newcomer: **Rita Hume**, who promises to have the same high standard. We are so lucky! Thursdays are still our 'closed' day, but we are getting a lot of in-housework done over the winter.

### **Te Whakatapuranga o Mihi Kerenene**

On 25 May over 100 people gathered in brilliant sunshine in Rāwene to remember the passing of Jane Takotowi Clendon *nee* Cochrane and to launch a book about her life.

The day started with a pōwhiri in the grounds of Clendon house, followed by a blessing of a book, and speeches about the lives of Jane and James Clendon. The day included a visit to the Rāwene Cemetery to visit family graves, tours through Clendon House, a display of whakapapa and lunch in the Rāwene Town Hall.

Jane's great great grandson, Michael Browne honoured his tūpuna whaea by writing a book about her early life. In this book he has unraveled many whakapapa lines hitherto unexplored. There are some lovely photos too. The book will be available for sale at the Museum for \$22 a copy.

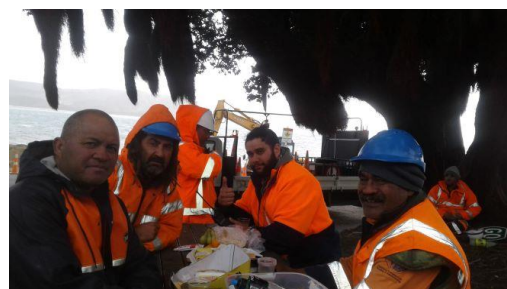
Jane Clendon was from the first marriage of Dennis Brown Cochrane to Takotowi (Te Uri Mahoe, Ngāti Manawa, Ngāi Tūpoto).

He had two other marriages and five other children. Descendants of these whānau were also represented along with members of Mangamuka, Mangataipa, Motukaraka and Panguru hapū, and the local Rāwene community.



**Holding back the ocean -** Summer visitors will certainly have memories of the constant traffic congestion around Opononi's wharf, boat-ramp, takeaway and shops, not to speak of the car park and I-Site. It was such good weather, and everyone had brought a boat and wanted to go fishing, regardless of queues for the boat-ramp, ability to back a trailer into the water, and all. It only lasted a couple of months, but it worried the NZTA as much as the locals. Well, the Powers That Be came up with the answer: build a **sea wall** about ten metres out, and then the road can be widened, and we can use the extra space for parking.

So that is what is currently happening – monstrous diggers, loaders, grabbers attacking our sandy beach, digging huge holes and filling them with even huger rocks (The rocks are trucked down from Horeke, they say, giving geologists in a few hundred years pause for thought) Rae has been monitoring the progress for the museum files, since it will never look the same again, and this is what it looks like just now. The work goes on six days a week, wet and windy weather regardless. - and it's rained a lot. Pity the poor Stop/Go people shrouded in wet-weather gear day after day, but still giving a cheerful wave as you move on.



If you come to the lunch on November 16<sup>th</sup>, you'll see what it looks like then! - Kia kaha, Alexa.