

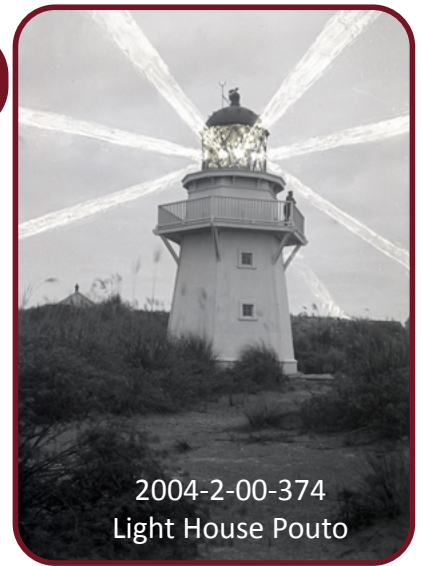


# Albertland Heritage Museum Inc

Newsletter November 2023

**Open  
Hours**

**Monday, Tuesday - Closed**  
**Wednesday - Saturday - 11am to 3pm**  
**Sunday - 1pm to 3pm**  
**The Museum is open for visitors**



## Editor's Note –

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Lyn from Auckland, a dedicated reader of our newsletter, who has demonstrated her profound interest in the history of the “Albertlanders” by highlighting not one but three (!!) errors in the October 2023 edition.

Lyn astutely suggested that, in the interest of maintaining accuracy, these errors should be rectified, and we wholeheartedly agree with her.

On Page 4, it should be noted that Alfred Henry Pook was born on 23rd September 1873, not Albert Henry Pook on 02nd September as previously mentioned.

On Page 5, we regret the incorrect printing of William Thomas Marcroft's birthday, which should read 27th March 1864, not 27th August 1864. It is a timely reminder that, despite the credibility of certain sources on the internet, inaccuracies can sometime occur. Notably, further research has revealed that this particular date in 1864 coincided with Easter Sunday, making it an even more momentous day for the early settlers.

Lastly, on Page 9, we apologise for the misspelling of Rev. Samuel Edger's name, which was erroneously written as Edgar.

We sincerely regret these errors and assure our readers that we strive for the utmost accuracy in our publications. We wholeheartedly welcome any feedback on our newsletters or any other activities undertaken by the museum.

Please feel free to reach out to us via email at [albertlandmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:albertlandmuseum@gmail.com) or by phone at (09) 423 8181 during our regular opening hours. We are always eager to engage in meaningful conversations with our community.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.  
Warm regards

Rose Reid and Rob Lennon

# THE CUREL FAMILY AT POUTO

A long time ago there was an adventurous seaman by the name of Edwin Curel, whose remarkable journey began in the 1860s when he first set sail from Dartmouth, England. After more than two decades at sea, exploring the vast oceans and serving aboard various ships, Edwin eventually found his way to the picturesque Kaipara Harbour in 1885. His life story would be full of thrilling adventures, from a cook/steward on board the 'Paulina' to Pilot/Signalman on the Kaipara harbour where he guided many a vessel across the treacherous bar.

Edwin's early life began in Marshfield, County of Gloucester, where he was born in 1844 to John and Catherine Curl (nee Bull). He had a large family with three brothers and one sister, and it is said that he changed the spelling of his last name to Curel when he set out on his seafaring adventures. In New Zealand, Edwin found himself at Pouto, bravely taking on the role of a Pilot/Signalman after gaining his Pilot's Certificate on 27th March 1885, where he often lent a helping hand to ships in distress, navigating the challenging Kaipara Bar. The absence of modern communication tools like ship radios made his work all the more challenging and heroic.



Edwin & Annie Curel  
2004-2-98-1438

Edwin's solitary life took a beautiful turn when he met a young lady named Annie Grant. Despite the odds, and an age difference of 24 years, they fell in love and got married, and together raised eleven children. Their story was one of resilience and perseverance, marrying against her parents' wishes, they overcame obstacles to build a family in a remote and isolated part of the world. Edwin was a man of many talents, serving his family and community in many

roles, from signalman and relieving lighthouse keeper to local blacksmith he could also turn his hand to making furniture, picture frames and coil mats.

The Curel family's story is one of hard work and determination, with Edwin and Annie's children learning the importance of unity and resilience from a young age. Their simple yet fulfilling life at Pouto was filled with daily chores, including making butter, tending to animals, and helping with household tasks. Edwin's resourcefulness and Annie's skills in cooking and sewing filled their basic government issued house which was lined in nothing but rough sawn kauri boards.



Edwin & Annie Curel and family  
2004-2-96-241



Curel home at Port Albert  
with Edwin & Children on verandah  
2004-2-96-242

As time passed, the family relocated to Port Albert in February 1910, where they continued to grow and prosper, establishing deep connections with the community and other families in the area. Their legacy lives on through a detailed family history book, showcasing their remarkable journey and the enduring spirit of the Curel family. Photos of their boats, the Spray, Kate, Thistle and Ivy and other memorabilia are carefully preserved at the Albertland Heritage Museum, where their story continues to inspire and captivate visitors. If you are curious to learn more about this extraordinary family, the museum's dedicated researchers can guide you through their remarkable tale and the rich history of the Albertland community.

Information for this article was found in the book "The Curel Family 1884 – 1994"

## Descendants of Edwin and Annie Curel (nee Grant)

Father - Edwin Curel      born 26/04/1844      Mother - Annie Grant      born 01/01/1868

### Children –

Hilda Lily Curel	born 25/03/1885	at Pouto	Married Percy C Gubb
Albert Edwin Curel	born 13/05/1886	at Pouto	Married Clara Bennett
Frank Clifford Curel	born 16/04/1888	at Pouto	Married Florrie Oldfield
Ivy Gladys Curel	born 28/10/1889	at Pouto	Married Steve Lipanovic
Archibald Grant Curel	born 05/02/1892	at Pouto	Married Selina Ross
Hazel May Curel	born 12/10/1893	at Pouto	Married Jack Ferrall
William Edmund Curel	born 30/05/1896	at Pouto	Married Clara Grice
Clarence Irvine Curel	born 24/05/1898	at Pouto	Married Margaret L Grice
Lawrence Melvin Curel	born 11/05/1903	at Helensville	Married Kathleen Wilson
Myrtle Iris Curel	born 01/06/1906	at Pouto	Married Gregory McKernan
Thelma Jean Curel	born 23/08/1908	at Pouto	Married Daniel Sellars
Myrtle Curel	stillborn 03/04/1895	(only lived for one hour)	

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## Editor's Pick

My favourite photos this month are of Mrs Simpson's magpie which by all accounts was a bit of a character. Living on the Okahukura Peninsula (now known more commonly as Tapora) this bird owned by Mrs Simpson appears to be very well trained when photographed by Harold Marsh in 1922.

In the Rodney & Otamatea Times (26 October 1938) – Tauhoa School "Nature Notes – Many different birds have been seen this week. Magpies have been numerous, and one very tame one has been flying about the school grounds. Shining cuckoos have been heard more frequently, and fantails have been fluttering about the trees in search of insects. Rata vines are now in bloom."

Love them or hate them the magpie is very intelligent and very territorial.

Let me know your stories – have you ever had a trained magpie??




Mrs Simpson's pet magpie



Magpie on a plate. Mrs Simpson's pet allows itself to be dished up 06/10/1922 at Okahukura



## WILSON CEMENT WORKS EXHIBITION OPENING 1ST NOV 2023

Exhibition sponsored by  **Golden Bay®**

Website Contact:

<https://warkworthmuseum.co.nz>

**ON SALE NOW**

**2024 Calendar**

This calendar is titled “Children Of Albertland”

Can be purchased at the museum for \$25.00ea or from the website for \$35.00ea

<https://albertlandmuseum.co.nz/product/2024-calendar/>



## Historical Albertland Birthdays

07th October 1880  
26th October 1886

Louisa Payne (born at Tokatoka)  
Mabel Bartlett Reid

## Friends and Supporters of Albertland Museum birthdays

03rd October  
18th October  
23rd October

Barbara Lane  
Patricia (Pat) Bennett  
Taylor Stables



## Labour Day Celebrations

Do you struggle to find the right balance between your work and personal life, a concept often referred to as 'work-life balance.' In New Zealand, there is one special day dedicated to relaxation and contemplation, which honours the persistent efforts of trade unions to establish this equilibrium.

On October 23rd, 2023 we all enjoyed this public holiday known as 'Labour Day.' In 1900 this day became a nationwide holiday following the enactment of the Labour Day Act 1899 by the Parliament. Originally it fell on the second Wednesday of October, but the date was later shifted to the fourth Monday in October under the provisions of the Public Holidays Act of 1910.

But how did Labour Day originate? Samuel Parnell, a skilled carpenter from Wellington, is widely recognised for advocating work-life balance by championing an 8-hour workday as early as 1840. He famously emphasised the importance of dividing the day into three equal parts, allocating eight hours for work, eight for sleep, and eight for recreation.

Parnell's influence sparked a movement, with unions advocating for the 8-hour workday. The first official "labour day demonstration" took place on October 28th, 1890, with the government endorsing parades in major cities and granting public servants the day off to participate. As a result, many businesses closed for the occasion.

The evolution of labour laws in New Zealand was gradual. The Employment of Females Act of 1873 prohibited the employment of women for more than eight hours a day. This was extended to children by the Employment of Females and Others Act of 1881, and to boys and youth, with some exceptions, under the Coal Mines Act of 1891.

Although several attempts to establish the 8-hour workday in legislation during the 1880s and 1890s were unsuccessful, it eventually became the norm in many industries. Yet, some employees still had to endure work-



weeks exceeding 40 hours, prompting a renewed focus on the 40-hour work-week. This led to its formal adoption through the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Amendment Act 1936.

While the 8-hour workday is not explicitly enshrined in present-day legislation, the implicit standard of a maximum 40-hour, five-day work-week is outlined in the Minimum Wage Act 1983.

# MARRIAGES

Reginald Shepherd and Margaret Eveline Salt  
07th October 1913



This photo has been used with permission from Robyn Osborne  
This photo has been AI Enhanced

## Wedding Bells.

### SHEPHERD—SALT.

On October 7th, at the residence of the bride's parents, Kaipara Flats, Reginald Shepherd, eldest son of Mr and Mrs J. A. Shepherd, of Port Albert, was joined in holy matrimony to Eveline, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs H. Salt. Mr Gordon Shepherd acted as best man, while Miss Dill and the bridesmaid's sister, Freda, acted as bridesmaids. The bride was attired in a pretty cream dress and carried a lovely bouquet. The bridesmaids were attired in dresses of white. The Rev MacDonald officiated at the ceremony. The happy couple are making their home at Port Albert.

Courtesy of Papers Past, Rodney & Otamatea Times 22/10/1913

## *Wandering Spirits – The Story of early New Zealand Swagmen and Vagrants*

In early colonial New Zealand, swagmen were often itinerant workers or people without a fixed home who moved around the country in search of employment or a place to settle. They would carry their belongings in a bundle called a “swag” as they travelled from place to place in search of work.

A common sight in rural areas, they would approach farms or homesteads looking for temporary employment in exchange for food or shelter and were often hired for short-term jobs, especially during peak labour seasons like harvest time. These men played a crucial role in meeting the labour needs of the emerging colonial colony. They were well-known for their resourcefulness and self-sufficiency.

Vagrants were thought of a little bit differently, living a transient lifestyle they were considered to be more of a social issue and a potential source of disorder in early colonial society. The authorities were so concerned about vagrancy that they introduced measures to control the movements of these men with the introduction of the Vagrancy Act of 1866 aimed to regulate and manage these men.



The experiences of swagmen and vagrants in the early days of New Zealand settlement were diverse. For some they chose the transient lifestyle and others were forced into it by circumstances beyond their control. As the economy diversified and more stable opportunities became available and other measures were introduced to reduce poverty and homelessness the number of swagmen and vagrants declined.

These itinerant men would from time to time pass through the Albertland district, often with no bother but on the odd occasion they caused upset amongst the local community as was the case when Mr and Mrs Treadwell were out working in their orchard on Wednesday 27th October 1875, the house was unlocked as they had become accustomed to trusting the honesty of their neighbours and did not have any fear of having their house robbed. They did not even feel the need to bolt their doors at night and described the prospect of their house being entered and robbed in broad daylight as ‘causing as much astonishment and consternation as an earthquake.’ However, their house was at the edge of a forest and the couple were blissfully working in their orchard when they heard the sound of a blind being lifted and the disturbance of their hens. After some investigation the couple found that a large blanket, bread, butter, soap and other things including a one-pound note had been taken. A search was made the following morning, following some tracks of a man’s bare footstep they located some distance into the bush they found the embers of a fire still burning. It was believed that this robbery had been the work of a vagrant passing through the district. This event caused a real stir amongst the locals of the district.

Sadly, in the case of one local family their son William became a swagman in his twenties, working only for food, not wages. After some big life changing events, losing one brother on the French-Belgium border in World War One, and another in the flu epidemic which was raging at the time of his return from the war it was the death of his father in 1917 that saw him return to the family farm and his marriage to “the most attractive woman he had ever met” soon after in 1918 that turned his life around. But his memories of his days as a swagman never left him, especially the numerous occasions when people turned him away without a bite to eat. After he married, he gave his young bride the strictest of instructions that she was never to turn anyone away from a meal. These hard times which he later referred to as his “university education of life” served him well as a fine member of his local community.