

The Albertland Gazette



Patron:
Mr Richard Te Haara



A Notable Scene on Board the Matilda Wattenbach On Her Passage Down The River 29 May 1862 164years ago

May 2026

Open Hours

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

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This month's photo is titled "Wishing the Albertland Party 'Godspeed' - 29 May 1862" as 15,000 people assembled at the East India Docks to farewell the Matilda Wattenbach and the Hanover as they began their voyage to New Zealand.

Descendants of the Albertlanders still commemorate this significant date today. Unfortunately, this year we have made the decision to scale down our celebrations due to the current economic climate. However, don't worry — we are already planning something extra special for next year as we celebrate 165 years since the arrival of the Albertland settlers.

Editors Message:

Another month has flown by since we sent out our last newsletter and we would like to sincerely thank those of you who contacted us with feedback following our last edition. This was our best month ever, with five people getting in touch — all for different reasons relating to articles featured in the newsletter. It is lovely to know that you are reading and enjoying these monthly updates. If you do have feedback, whether good or bad, we always love to hear from you, so please keep it coming. Tell us the stories you would like to hear more about.

We have also had a steady stream of visitors to the museum in recent weeks despite the economic downturn and the rather frightening petrol prices. Many people have been catching the bus to Wellsford, which makes for a very easy and enjoyable day out. Pensioners can travel free, which makes it even better. We have recently welcomed visitors travelling by bus from Whangaparaoa and Orewa, so why not give it a try yourself?

Our town also has some wonderful gift shops, op shops and coffee spots — a real country delight with plenty to explore.

Thank you all for your continued support and encouragement — we truly do appreciate it.

Warm regards,
Rose and Rob

Gordon Hendriksen's 90th Birthday - by Barbara Lane

Port Albert Hall, Saturday 9th of May 2026 was auspicious as everyone was able to celebrate this occasion on the actual day of Gordon's birth.



When Gordon heard that there was going to be a big celebration for his 90th birthday, to be held at Port Albert Hall in Port Albert, his words were "I don't think many people will turn up". How wrong could he be. Imagine his surprise when the hall filled up with about seventy or so people. Everyone else knew that there would be many there to help him celebrate this huge milestone in his life.

(A brief history of his life reads further on) This day was all thanks to Jenny Lambert, Pam Tod, Adrienne McLean, and Rose Reid for helping spread the word and doing a lot of the hard work setting up the hall.

The guests were asked to bring a plate for a shared lunch, and many started to arrive from 11am onwards, with the guest of honour having insisted on driving himself arriving not long after. The hall was filled with so many people who knew each other and some had a lot of catching up to do.

It was great to see older brother Barry and long-time friend Percy there, also, to congratulate Gordon on this milestone in his life.

The afternoon had a definite nautical theme as Gordon, having lived all his life in and around the Oruawharo River, and parts of the Kaipara Harbour, has a love of the water. He has built three sail boats over the years the latest he sold off in recent years. There are many model boats displayed in both his home and the Albertland Museum for all to see.

Jenny Lambert had displayed a dinghy that was owned by Gordon, a fishing net, models of boats and lighthouses he had made.

Jenny had made a photo board; Barbara Lane had a PowerPoint slide show of photos she had gathered from Gordon in the past with a few extra shared by others. Grace Harris made a lovely lighthouse cake on an island surrounded by the sea. The decorative lighthouse actually had a light on top that worked.

The afternoon progressed as follows: Jenny welcomed everyone, Ray Hollis blessed the food and then the first course was ready to eat. Once this was over Barbara spoke about her friendship with Gordon, then Maurie Hooper spoke about being a year younger than Gordon and had boarded at Whangarei Boys High School at the same time. Not sure whether they had fond memories of this time! Next was the sweet course. There was not a lot left but Jenny was able to take some sweets for their cuppa after the service at Church Hill Church the next day.

Thanks to all the wonderful people who provided a vast array of delights, both savoury and sweet for all to partake of. A true feel of love, friendship, and community among all who attended.

Life was varied for Gordon as follows:

He was brought up on a dairy farm in Topuni.

The old Wellsford Primary was his first school (sadly now demolished) then he boarded at Whangarei Boys High School.

Leaving school, he came home to work on the farm.

At the age of twenty-six he became a relief lighthouse keeper for 3 years and worked on sixteen lighthouses around New Zealand. Family called him back to work on the farm and he continued with this until moving to Wharf Road in Port Albert in 2003.

In 2004 he joined as a volunteer with the Albertland Museum, served on the committee before retiring from duty in 2022 – eighteen years of dedication. Model boats and lighthouses have been a long-established hobby; one he pursued while on the lighthouses as this was a very lonely job at times.

He has built three boats for sailing on the Kaipara. In more recent times were Vesper a 47ft schooner launched 1980s and Tramp a ketch rigged motor sailer launched July 2001 and sold 6 or 7 years ago now since in a watery grave.

Gordon attends church most Sundays when he can.

Kathleen at the Port Albert Store was, sadly, unable to attend and would have loved to have been there to celebrate as Gordon is a regular at the store meeting friends, having a coffee, or picking up his meal of fish and chips.

Over the years Gordon has entertained many people on his piano accordion. He would love to still play it but holding it is now difficult for him. His other musical genius is the upright piano, and he has entertained at the Albertland Museum on occasion.

Back in 2022 Gordon spoke at the Wellsford Genealogy Group about his time on the lighthouses. A vast number of photos were put into a presentation. During the talk and afterwards he was asked many questions about what life was like. This life was one of extreme hardship and nobody nowadays can imagine what it was like to be left for weeks on end with little face to face contact. There was always a radio of course to be used when necessary. All of the lighthouses are now run automatically.

That previous presentation helped to prepare today's at Gordon's 90th and the same information was included in an Albertland Museum newsletter late in 2022 therefore most would have read a more detailed description of life on a lighthouse back then.

Gordon and friendship:

The writer is of the opinion and hopefully speaks for others as well. Gordon is a gentleman, loves those he meets up with, is a regular at his church, values Jenny's friendship, and he adores his home helpers Pam and Adrienne. He has a wicked sense of humour and enjoys sitting and chatting over a cup of tea with a never-ending supply of biscuits at hand.

Well done, Gordon! It has been a pleasure for us all to share your 90th celebration!

Gordon cutting the cake



Jenny's Photo Montage



Gordon, Percy & Barry



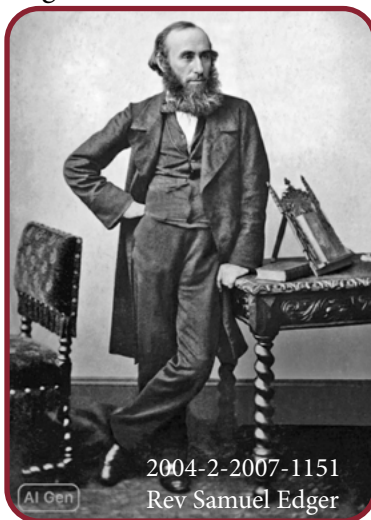
29th of May Celebrations

164 years since the Albertlanders left England...

The dream of Albertland was born not only from a desire for land, but from a longing to build a better society. Across the smoky industrial towns and crowded streets of England, a group of determined men and women imagined a new settlement at the far end of the world — a place where families could live honestly from the soil, where education and religion would guide the community, and where the evils that plagued so many towns at home could be left behind forever.

The founders of the Albertland Settlement Movement were men of vision and conviction. Their plans were ambitious, perhaps at times even impractical, yet they were driven by ideals rather than profit. They believed a colony should be more than scattered farms hacked from the wilderness. It should be a true community. In their plans, portions of the settlement were carefully reserved for townships. These would become centres of learning, worship, trade, and fellowship. Churches, schools, libraries, newspaper offices, and businesses were all imagined before a single tree had been felled in the Kaipara bush. The cultivation of the heart and mind, they believed, should advance alongside the cultivation of the soil.

To support one another, the settlers organised co-operative schemes even before they sailed. One of the most practical was the Agricultural Implement Association, established with a capital of £1000 in one-pound shares. Instead of each struggling family having to purchase expensive farming tools, implements would be centrally owned and shared amongst settlers. It was a bold example of community cooperation — neighbours helping neighbours to survive in a difficult new land.



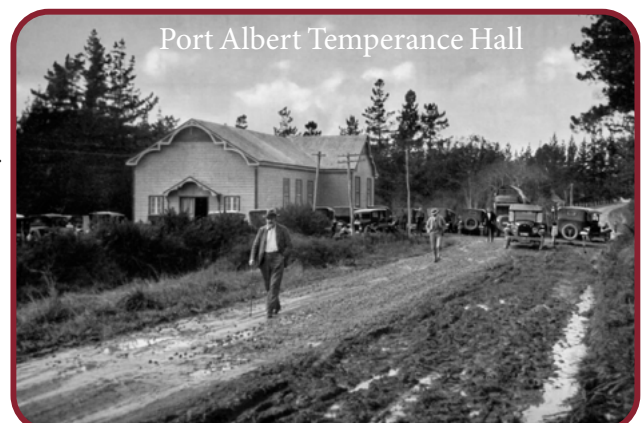
The organisers carefully selected the kinds of settlers they hoped to attract. Farmers were needed, of course, but also blacksmiths, carpenters, shoemakers, printers, teachers, and ministers. The colony was intended to function as a complete and moral society from the beginning.

Religion and education were considered essential. After much discussion and correspondence throughout England, the Reverend Samuel Edger of Abingdon was chosen as minister. Edger carried with him an even greater vision than colonisation itself — the creation of an unsectarian Christian church where Anglicans, Wesleyans, Baptists, Independents, and all sincere Christians could worship together in harmony. A schoolmaster, John Edwards of Bradford, was appointed to oversee education, while Doctors James Bell and Hooper were selected to care for the health of the settlers.

Yet woven deeply through the Albertland ideal was another powerful movement of the Victorian age — **TEMPERANCE**.

In nineteenth-century Britain, drunkenness was seen by many reformers as one of society's greatest curses. Strong drink was blamed for poverty, violence, broken families, crime, and suffering. Among the supporters of the Albertland movement were many passionate advocates of total abstinence, determined that their new settlement would not repeat the mistakes of the old world.

Mr J. Parsons of Birmingham proposed the formation of a Temperance Lodge connected with the settlement. This branch of the "Sons of Temperance" would encourage total abstinence, provide mutual aid during sickness or death, and strengthen the bonds of brotherhood amongst settlers. Above all, it hoped to prevent the establishment of public houses and liquor shops within the new community.



For many Albertlanders, temperance was not simply about avoiding alcohol. It was about building a disciplined, moral, and united society. Port Albert and Paparoa would become strong temperance settlements, though Maungaturoto eventually permitted a licensed hotel.

The settlers' commitment to temperance was tested long before they reached their new homes.

In September 1862, after months crowded aboard emigrant ships crossing dangerous seas, the weary Albertlanders finally arrived in Auckland. Yet their hardships were far from over. Auckland was not the end of the journey. Families still had to arrange difficult transport north to the Kaipara by whatever means they could find.

Amidst this uncertainty came one bright occasion.

On the evening of 3 October 1862, a few of the settlers attended the Anniversary Soirée of the Auckland Total Abstinence Society at the Odd Fellows' Hall. It was a grand and hopeful gathering. The hall was beautifully decorated with flowers, evergreens, banners, and flags. Colonel Haultain presided over the meeting while ministers, civic leaders, and settlers filled the room.

After tea was served and the tables cleared, hymns rang out through the hall. Speaker after speaker rose to defend the cause of temperance.

Mr Cornford spoke passionately of the destruction caused by drunkenness — deserted wives, ruined homes, broken fortunes, and children left destitute. He declared that the society existed to protect families from the “fearful wreck” brought about by strong drink. He expressed the heartfelt hope that “never, whilst Albertland was a settlement, should one store be opened for the sale of intoxicating liquors.”

Songs followed, including “Sparkling and Bright,” while Reverend Davis reminded the audience that alcohol was scientifically proven to poison the human body. He warned of the crimes committed under its influence and condemned the enormous social cost of drink.

The Reverend Joseph Long described the sad scenes witnessed daily in Auckland streets — men and women disgracing themselves under the influence of alcohol while their children suffered. Total abstinence, he argued, offered the only true protection.

Hymns, recitations, speeches, and songs continued throughout the evening. Sergeant Sorrell sang, children recited temperance verses, and old teetotallers proudly declared decades of sobriety. One gentleman announced that he had raised his ten children according to temperance principles.

As the evening drew to a close, the Temperance National Anthem was sung, and the gathering dispersed into the Auckland night.

For the Albertland settlers, this was more than a meeting. It was a declaration of the kind of society they hoped to build in the wilderness beyond the Kaipara Harbour — a settlement founded not merely on land ownership, but on cooperation, morality, education, faith, and sobriety.

Though the realities of frontier life would challenge many of these ideals, the temperance spirit remained woven deeply into the story of Albertland, shaping its communities, its halls, its churches, and the character of many of the people who endured the hardships of pioneering life in northern New Zealand.

You are all invited to our Open Day at the Albertland Heritage Museum on Saturday 30th May, from 11am to 3pm.

Come along and enjoy a visit through our museum, chat with our volunteers, explore our displays, and share your family connections and memories of Albertland.

We will also have a table of second-hand books available for purchase, with all proceeds helping to raise funds for the Museum.

See our flyer for full details — we look forward to seeing you there!

ALBERTLAND

HERITAGE MUSEUM

OPEN DAY!

Celebrate our special anniversary

the **29TH** OF MAY

when the Albertlander
settlers set sail for
New Zealand in 1862.

SATURDAY

30TH MAY

11 - 3 PM



TOP HAT. Owned by CHARLES DOUDNEY CRAY. Who travelled to New Zealand with his wife Margaret (nee Wheeler) and seven children on the "Hanover"



THE NONCONFORMIST COLONY: THE DEMONSTRATION AT THE EAST INDIA DOCKS.



THE "HANOVER" ALBERTLANDER SETTLERS SET SAIL FOR NEW ZEALAND IN 1862.



BOOK SALE

The Library Plaza
15 Port Albert Road, Wellsford

your chance to pick up
some cheap
SECOND HAND BOOKS!

Come along and be part of our heritage!

Birthday Wishes for May

We would also like to take this opportunity to wish a very Happy Birthday to all of our wonderful volunteers, members and supporters celebrating birthdays during the month of May.

Thank you for everything you do to support our museum and community throughout the year. We hope your special day has been filled with happiness, laughter and time spent with those you love.

A Happy Birthday to Jenny Driskel, Amanda Lancaster, Rex Eagle, Trish Treadwell, Christy Weightman and Emma Fairweather.

Quotation for May

“A river is water in its loveliest form; rivers have life and sound and movement and infinity of variation, rivers are veins of the earth through which the lifeblood returns to her heart.”

Written by Roderick Haig-Brown who was born in Sussex, England in 1908 and grew up surrounded by strong Victorian values, outdoor sport and a deep appreciation for nature. He eventually settled in British Columbia, where he worked as a logger, fisherman, and guide before becoming one of Canada's best-known writers on fly fishing, conservation, and the natural world. Living beside the Campbell River with his wife and family, he published more than twenty books while also serving his community as a magistrate, conservation advocate, broadcaster, and university chancellor. His writing, including *A River Never Sleeps* and *Measure of the Year*, reflected his lifelong belief in fair play, responsibility, and the protection of the natural environment.



What's On

Around the town this month there have been many events for May – Music Month. Check out this link to see what has been happening

<https://www.localmatters.co.nz/events/music/nz-music-month-wellsford/>

Also, the children at Wellsford Primary School are busy fundraising for the Aims Games to be held in Tauranga on **Saturday 5th to Friday 11th September**.

You can find out more about this at <https://nzaimsgames.co.nz>

Their next fundraiser will be on the 20th June at the Wellsford RSA where they will be volunteering to wash cars for a small fee. Go along and show your support.

30th May 2026 – Albertland Heritage Museum will be holding an ‘Open Day’ from 11 – 3pm. Entry free. Children welcome. We will also have a large range of second hand books for sale.

1st June 2026 – Kings Birthday

14th June 2026 – Port Albert Community Church Service – 1.30pm at Church Hill Road, Port Albert. Please bring a plate.

20th August 2026 – Our own volunteer, Barbara Lane is supporting Blood Cancer NZ by raising funds and climbing the Sky Tower in Auckland. We will have more about Barbara’s amazing story in coming months but in the meantime if you would like to support Barbara please go to <https://www.stepupchallenge.org.nz/barbara-lane>

The Curator's Chronicle

Kaipara Trading Boats – the ‘Minnie Casey’

For many visitors to the Albertland Heritage Museum one of the highlights is our remarkable collection of model boats. The four emigrant ships — Matilda Wattenbach, Hanover, Miles and Tyburnia — were beautifully crafted by local man Colin Childs, and visitors are often amazed at the patience and skill required to create such magnificent models.

Deeper within the museum is another treasured collection, this time of the working boats that once travelled the Kaipara waterways carrying mail, livestock, groceries, timber, milk and passengers long before decent roads connected the district. These detailed models were created by former lighthouse keeper and sailor Gordon Hendriksen, whose work can also be found throughout the wider community. A report by Barbara Lane on Gordon’s 90th birthday celebrations can also be found in this newsletter.

One of the most fascinating vessels represented is the steamship, Minnie Casey. Built in 1875 on Auckland’s North Shore by Sims and Brown for Irish entrepreneur Jeremiah Casey and named after one of his daughters, the vessel quickly gained attention for her speed and elegant finish.

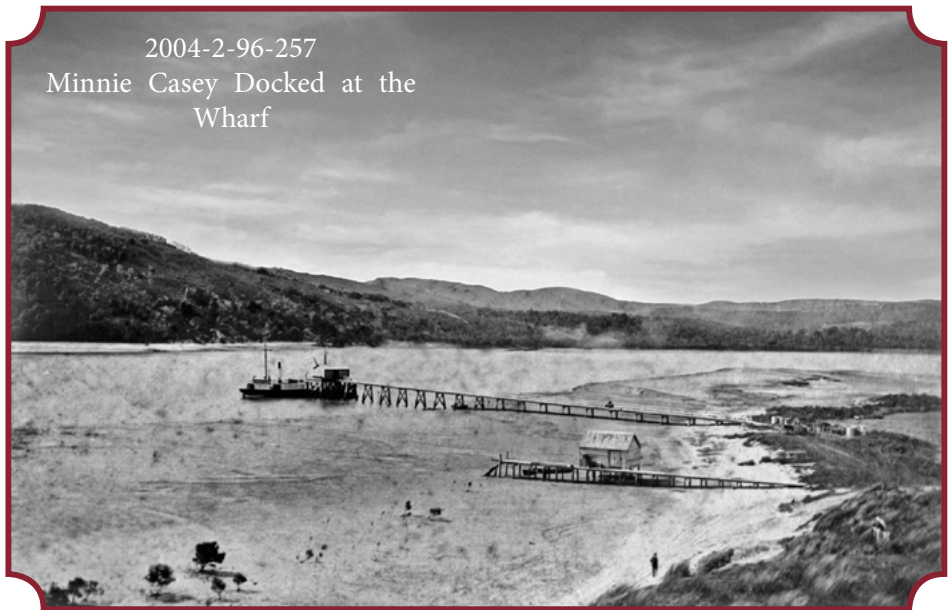
Read a full account of her trial voyage from Papers Past, Auckland Star, 15 September 1875, Page 3

Per “Star” Carrier Pigeon Rangitoto Channel, 1.30pm On Board Minnie Casey Left on trial trip at 12.10pm after being delayed by the cook, who had no saucepan to cook the spuds. Went down harbour in fine style, licking the Manaia into fits, she having the advantage of a spread of canvas. She did the measured mile in seven minutes, with 70lbs pressure of steam. She passed Bean Rock light at 12.28, just as the neck of the ninth bottle of Bass’s went over the lee side. Fine boat. Been in condition. Captain Casey justly proud of his new vessel. Government Engineer satisfied. Ship credit to builder. Machinery works well. Most easy boat under steam. No motion perceptible in

spite of sea. Doing ten knots. 2.15pm Dined on rump steak and onions. Captain Casey is at the head of the table, full of spirits at the success. We met the Hauraki and steamed round under her stern and overhauled her in two-tuos; were three lengths ahead off Brown's Island. The engines worked well; speed, average 9 1/2 knots with 70lbs pressure. Will be in Auckland in an hour.

Originally operating on the Auckland to Mahurangi route, the Minnie Casey later transferred to the Kaipara trade where she became a familiar sight carrying supplies and passengers throughout the harbour settlements.

This trial trip of Captain Casey's new screw steamer had taken on board a select party. It was the intention of Captain Casey if the machinery worked satisfactorily to send the boat up to Mahurangi the following day instead of the Lady Bowen. The reporter added that the boat had been handsomely finished, outside and inside and her cabins decorated very neatly making her an exceedingly useful boat.



Casey used her on the Auckland to Mahurangi run until 1878 when the vessel was transferred over to the Auckland to Kaipara run. In the same year, 1878 the Kaipara Steam Navigation Company begun by William Colbeck started up in opposition and Colbeck offered a substantial sum to buy the vessels that Casey was using on the run which he accepted.

Like many hardworking steamers of the era, the Minnie Casey experienced her share of drama. In 1883 she collided with the brig Syren at Te Kopuru Wharf, becoming tangled before the vessels were eventually cut free. Two years later she struck the steamer Tangihua on the Wairoa River during a dark night collision that caused the Tangihua to sink, although thankfully all aboard escaped safely.

An account on this incident from Papers Past, Press, 21 December 1885 Page 3

“At two o'clock this morning, when the steamer Minnie Casey was on her passage from Dargaville, she collided with the steamer Tangihua off Beacon Point, Wairoa River. On the steamers meeting, the Tangihua suddenly starboarded her helm, running; completely under the bows of the Minnie Casey, which struck her on the starboard side.”

All on board the Tangihua jumped on the Minnie Casey, and the former steamed about without control for eight minutes and sank in deep water. It was a pitch dark night but all the lights were burning. The cause of the collision was the Tangihua's helmsmen starboarding instead of porting. The Tangihua was owned by Captain Seymour and was uninsured. The Minnie Casey was slightly damaged in the port bow.

In 1888 disaster was narrowly avoided when heat from the boiler caused a pantry fire which was discovered before the vessel could be lost. Later sold to Sanford, the Minnie Casey became one of the early fishing trawlers operating in the Hauraki Gulf before finally being laid up at Rakino Island and broken up in 1909.

Today, through Gordon Hendriksen's carefully crafted model, the story of the Minnie Casey continues to live on, reminding us of the vital role these hardworking boats played in connecting the isolated communities of the Kaipara.

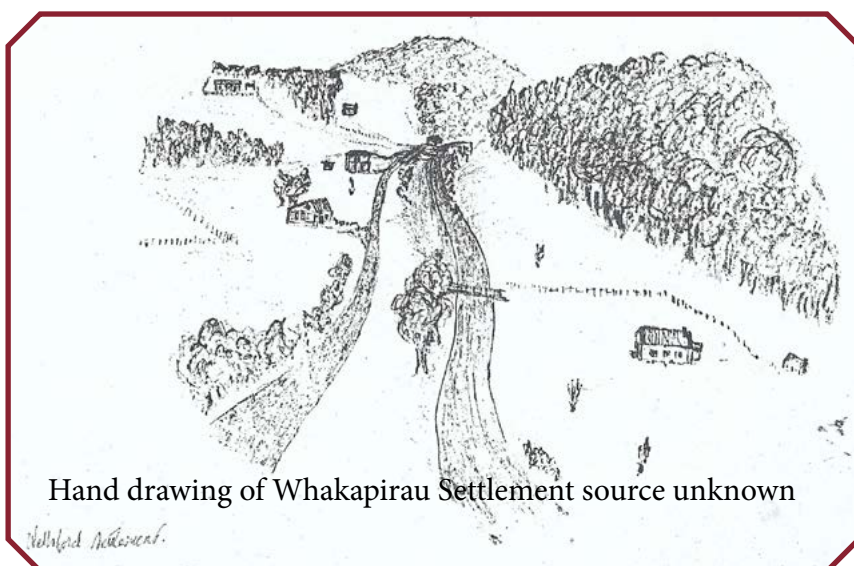
The Wellsford Post Office - Our Calendar Story

For those of you lucky enough to have purchased one of our 2026 calendars, you will have noticed the Wellsford Post Office featured in the month of May.

Since 1926 this magnificent structure, built by J. W. Bardsley of Papatoetoe, has stood on the corner of Rodney Street and Station Road. No longer used as a Post Office, it has many stories to tell, as we discovered recently after uncovering a box of records relating to this institution tucked away in a corner of the museum. Much work is still required to make sense of it all, but in the meantime we thought we would share a little of its fascinating history in this newsletter.

Many of you will know of the small settlement on the shores of the Whakapirau River known as “Old Wellsford” or Whakapirau. Here lived a small band of Albertland settlers, most of whom had arrived on the Hanover. Like many early settlers, they developed their farms from thick bushland.

It was here at Whakapirau, at the home of Mr Charles Rushbrook, that the first Wellsford Post Office opened on 1 February 1874.



Mr Rushbrook’s home was located on the right bank of the Whakapirau River and was accessible only by crossing a fragile walkway or bridge. Settlers would cross this bridge and make their way up a bridle path to a service hatch on the Rushbrook verandah. Mail arrived either by packhorse or by small boat from Port Albert, nestled on the Oruawharo River, where another Post Office had already been operating since 1 July 1867.

Rushbrook is generally regarded as the first Wellsford Postmaster, although records in the Post Office Establishment Book (Staff) for Auckland Province (1869–1887) list his wife Louisa as having been officially appointed from 13 February 1874 on a salary of £6 per annum. Louisa was also the local school mistress and worked limited hours — around ten hours per week — carrying out postal duties.

The Post Office was not issued with an official postal datestamp until late 1887, when the Post Office supplied “A” Class or Coin Type datestamps to most offices that did not already possess them. Prior to this, the Rushbrooks would have cancelled outward mail stamps by pen and ink or forwarded mail to Port Albert for cancellation.

The population of this small district in 1906 was recorded as just 171 people. Louisa’s daughter, Ethel, succeeded her in January 1907, but following Ethel’s marriage later that same year, Louisa — then aged 73 — resumed responsibility for the office.

When the railway line from Auckland reached Wellsford in April 1909, the Post Office operations were transferred to the newly opened railway station. Postal and telegraphic business occupied the southern end of the station building. The Stationmaster, Harry Daniell, was primarily concerned with railway operations and from 1918 was assisted in postal duties by local resident Mavis Smith, who was appointed Assistant Postmistress. As Wellsford grew, the station Post Office became increasingly inadequate to cope with expanding postal business brought about by rail connections north and south. In response, a permanent full-time Post Office was established in 1926. The new building also provided accommodation for the Postmaster.

The first permanent Postmaster employed directly by the Post and Telegraph Department was Frederick R.

White, appointed on 7 August 1926, with the official opening conducted the previous day, 6 August 1926, by Mr William Jones MP.

A manual telephone exchange with 123 subscribers was established in the Post Office building in 1928. Extensive alterations followed in 1936, including improved living accommodation for the Postmaster at the rear of the building. By the 1930s the population of Wellsford had risen to approximately 450 people.

Other early Postmasters included:

- J. T. Reidy (1926–1933)
- A. G. Shirley (1933–1934)
- H. Wiggins (1934–1936)
- H. R. Moore (1936–1946)
- P. Baikie (1946–1948)
- S. W. Cowdell (1948–1953)
- J. Walsh (1953–1954)
- W. J. Weston (1954–1956)
- H. R. J. Brewer (1956–1958)
- C. G. McGregor (1958–1961)
- C. S. Shirley (1961–1966)
- C. A. Sharpe (1966–1967)
- H. W. U. Donald (1967–1969)
- J. S. V. Archer (1969–1975)
- J. S. Toves (1975–1977)
- A. B. Waters (1977–1980)
- L. R. Brokenshire (1985–)



Wellsford Post Opening 6th August 1926

A postman's delivery service for the town commenced on 12 January 1959. In 1963 a new residence for the Postmaster was built in Hanover Street, allowing the former living quarters within the Post Office to be converted into expanded postal facilities. Eventually the Post Office itself relocated further up Rodney Street.

Up until the 1910s and 1920s, mail in the Wellsford district — as in much of New Zealand — was carried in bulk by contractors delivering to local Post Offices for collection by residents.

The earliest surviving contract relevant to the district, recorded in archives at the Post Office Museum and Archives, covered the route “Warkworth–Port Albert–Wharehine,” operating once weekly by horse and foot during 1872. The contractor was Thomas Inger, who received a government subsidy of £35 per annum, paid quarterly.

By 1887–1888 a two-year contract operated between “Warkworth–Wellsford–Port Albert,” twice weekly on horseback, for £62/8/- per annum. The contractor was T. Hunter.

The extension of the railway north from Auckland during the early 1900s created numerous railheads, from which “feeder” coach and mail services developed. Between 1900 and 1902, bulk mail contract services in Wellsford reached their peak, with four separate three-year contracts operating:

- Wellsford–Hoteo North (weekly horse service, C. L. Level, £11 per annum)
- Wellsford–Matakohe (weekly horse service, A. Judd, £99 per annum)
- Wellsford–Te Arai (weekly horse service, J. Barclay, £25 per annum)
- Wellsford–Port Albert (weekly horse service, G. C. Gubb, £9/10/- per annum)

These smaller services were connected to the much larger Devonport–Wellsford bulk contract, carried by Paterson & Co. between 1900 and 1902 for £595 per annum via Oneroa, Red Vale, Wade, Orewa and Warkworth. These mail contracts gradually declined after the 1900s due to the growth of coastal steamer mail services, house-to-house delivery in larger settlements, and the development of increasingly motorised rural delivery systems.

By 1913–1915 only a single Wellsford–Pakiri contract remained, operating twice weekly by packhorse under contractor A. A. Wyatt for £58 per annum.

A telegraph connection reached Wellsford by about October 1888, with the Postmaster acting as telegraphist.

A manual telephone exchange with 123 subscribers officially opened on 16 January 1929, while an automatic exchange serving 945 subscribers opened on 29 February 1964.

The growth of the town and its businesses can be seen through the steady increase in telephone subscribers:

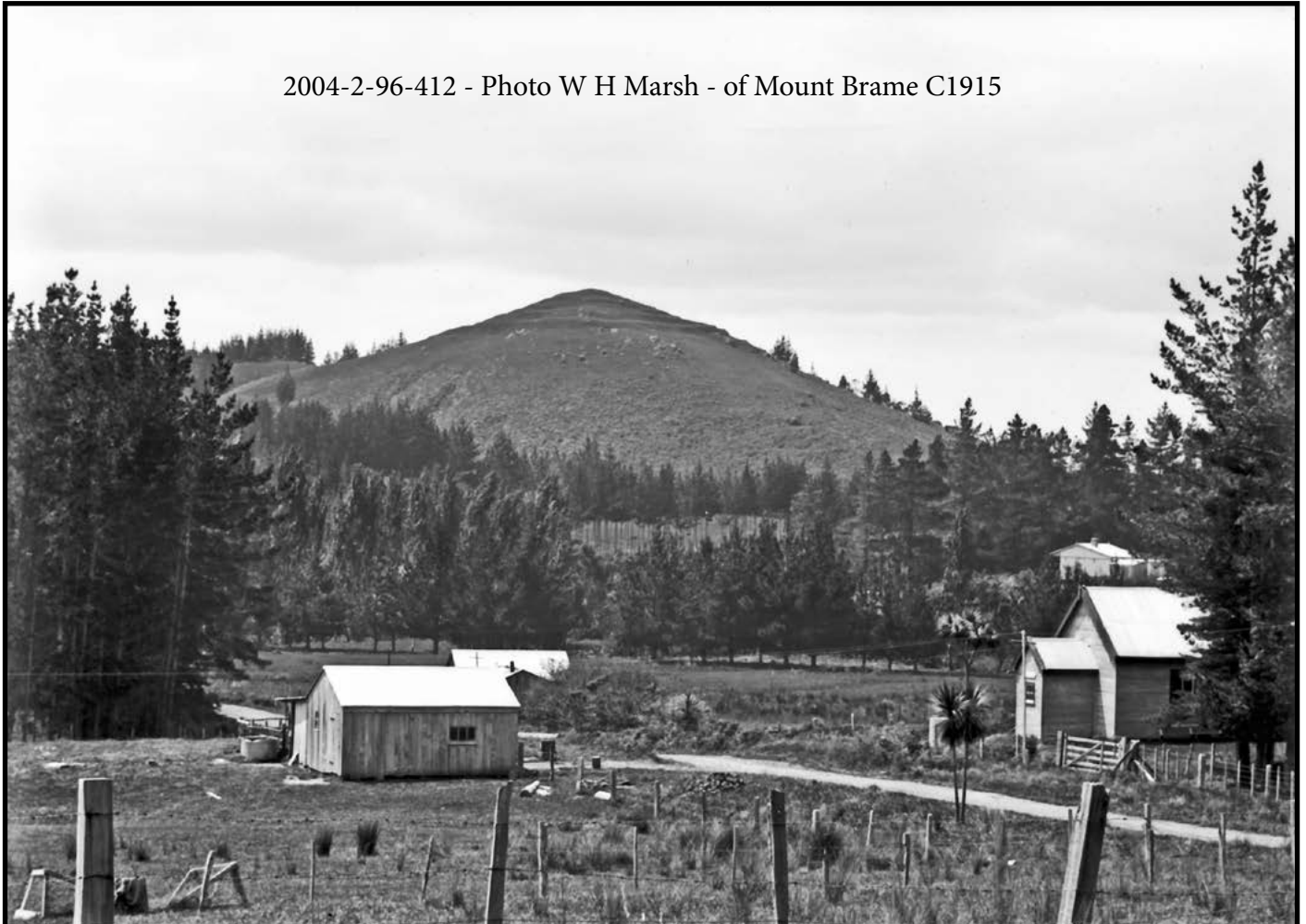
- 1929 — 123 subscribers
- 1939 — 360 subscribers
- 1949 — 562 subscribers
- 1959 — 816 subscribers
- 1969 — 1,052 subscribers
- 1979 — 1,158 subscribers
- 1988 — 1,231 subscribers

On 10 December 1970 all toll and long-distance operations were transferred to the Warkworth group centre as part of a Departmental policy extending local calling areas. As a result, staff numbers at Wellsford were reduced from 23 to 9.

Further renovations in 1973 saw the former telephone exchange room converted for use by rural mail contractors and postmen.

Today the old Wellsford Post Office remains one of the town's most recognisable historic buildings — a reminder of an era when mail, telegrams and telephone calls connected isolated rural communities with the rest of the country.

2004-2-96-412 - Photo W H Marsh - of Mount Brame C1915



Wishing you all a very late Happy Mothers' Day – Sunday, May 10th

Whether you celebrated with your loved ones from afar or were lucky enough to spend time together on the day, I hope this special occasion brought you warmth, comfort, and appreciation for all the wonderful things you have done throughout the years.

Mothers may not always get everything right, but they always do their very best, often putting others before themselves.

For a little bit of humour, I recently uncovered this delightful newspaper cutting from days gone by. It certainly gave me a giggle, as many of the comments and situations mentioned are things I have heard along the way myself!

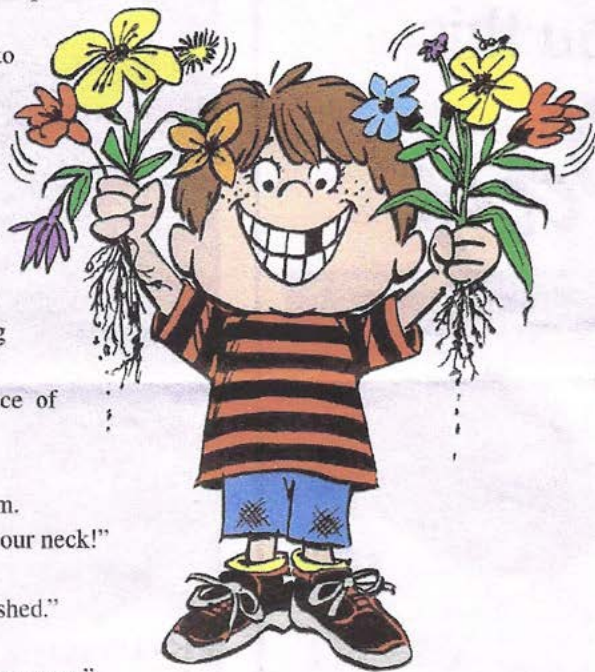
Hopefully the younger generations have learnt a thing or two from our mistakes.

Things my mother taught me

For all the mums who sometimes hear these words coming out of their mouths and think – 'Oh no, I'm turning into my mother!'

- My mother taught me to appreciate a job well done.
"If you're going to kill each other, do it outside – I just finished cleaning."
- My mother taught me religion.
"You better pray that will come out of the carpet."
- My mother taught me about time travel.
"If you don't straighten up, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week."
- My mother taught me logic.
"Because I said so, that's why."
- My mother taught me foresight.
"Make sure you wear clean underwear, in case you're in an accident."
- My mother taught me irony.
"Keep laughing and I'll give you something to cry about."
- My mother taught me about the science of osmosis.
"Shut your mouth and eat your supper."
- My mother taught me about contortionism.
"Will you look at the dirt on the back of your neck!"
- My mother taught me about stamina.
"You'll sit there 'til all that spinach is finished."
- My mother taught me about weather.
"It looks as if a tornado swept through your room."
- My mother taught me how to solve physics problems.
"If I yelled because I saw a meteor coming toward you, would you listen then?"
- My mother taught me about hypocrisy.
"If I've told you once, I've told you a million times – don't exaggerate."
- My mother taught me the circle of life.
"I brought you into this world, and I can take you out."
- My mother taught me about behaviour modification.
"Stop acting like your father."
- My mother taught me about envy.
"There are millions of less fortunate children in this world who don't have wonderful parents like you do."

Thanks, Mum.



NAU MAI HAERE MAI: COME CELEBRATE

MATARIKI

WHERE: TE HANA TE AO MARAMA

311 STATE HIGHWAY 1, TE HANA

TIME: 10.AM TO 2.PM

DATE: 10TH OF JULY 2026

Stalls

Mirimiri

Free Hangi served at

12.30pm

Free Rides

Playground Castle, Vertical Bungee

Free Sausage sizzle

Kids face painting

Free entertainment

**Later that afternoon we have
line dancing from 3pm to 5pm**

For more information call

0210705948

