

The Albertland Gazette



Patron:
Mr Richard Te Haara



Hoteo North Historical
School & Hall
1883 - 1940
Grand Re-Opening
Held 25 July 2026



Gordon Levett - Ribbon Cutting

July 2026

Open Hours

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

Contents:

Gorbey's Chemists - Calendar Feature Birthday Wishes	Page 2-3
Curators Chronicle – To Spend A Penny	Page 4-5
Journey of the Matilda Wattenbach cont Albertland Heritage AGM	Page 5-6-7
Quotation	Page 8
Pic of the Month What's On	Page 9
Hoteo North Historical Hall	Page 10-11-12
Out and About	Page 13-14

Editors Message:

As you can see from the content of this month's newsletter, our volunteers have once again had a busy time out and about in the community, taking part in a variety of local events. This is something we truly enjoy, and it provides a wonderful opportunity to connect with people, share our stories, and raise awareness of the museum.

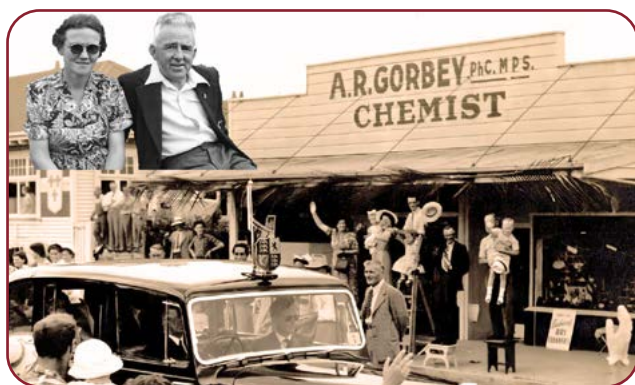
It also reminds everyone that we are so much more than just a building sitting in the middle of town. We are a living part of our community — preserving our history, sharing memories, and creating opportunities for people to come together.

We have also enjoyed seeing a steady stream of visitors, especially crafters and those with an appreciation for beautiful handmade work, coming along to view our amazing quilting exhibition, Shared Threads. This wonderful exhibition has one more month to run and will close on 31st August, so if you haven't had a chance to visit yet, make sure you come along and experience the incredible talent of our local quilting group, the Friday Crafters.

The 21st of June marked the shortest day of the year, and while the winter mornings have certainly been cold, July has blessed us with a beautiful run of fine weather. The clear skies and sunshine have been a lovely reminder that the seasons are slowly turning, with spring just around the corner — a promise of good things to come.

Warm regards,
Rose and Rob

Gorbey's Chemists - Our Calendar Story



The Gorbey's: Wellsford's First Pharmacist

For many years, Wellsford's sole chemist was Arthur Robert Gorbey, who arrived in the district in 1931. He would go on to establish a pharmacy that became a familiar part of Wellsford's business community for many decades to follow.

Arthur, like fellow Wellsford businessman Harry Culpan, was a product of the goldfields. He was born in Thames at a time when the mining centre was flourishing. As a young man, he was a prominent athlete, representing Thames in both rugby and cricket. Later, in Wellsford, he became well known as an excellent golfer and bowler. When he retired to Mt Albert in 1958, he had the opportunity to develop his bowling skills even further, eventually achieving an exceedingly high rating in the sport.

Not long after qualifying as a chemist, Arthur saw an advertisement in an Auckland newspaper promoting the advantages of establishing a dispensing business in Wellsford. The offer included premises rent-free for six months as an inducement to set up in the growing township.

Arthur travelled to Wellsford and, like Harry Culpan, had the shrewd business sense to recognise the potential in what he saw. In 1931, he established his pharmacy in the smaller Wellsford Chambers building, located on Station Road. The building also housed Dr Osborne of Warkworth, Arthur Barnard—later Speaker of the House of Representatives—and a young solicitor, Edward (Ted) Sellars, who would become Wellsford's first resident lawyer.

It was not an easy time to start a business. In 1931, the country was in the grip of the Great Depression, farmers' incomes had been cut to the bone, and many families were struggling to survive on the bare necessities. Arthur remembered seeing the pitiful lines of men trudging over McGrath's Hill from the relief works at Tomarata.

In those difficult years, much business was conducted by barter. Meat, firewood, fruit, vegetables and timber were freely offered in exchange for goods and services when cash was scarce.

As his business became established, Arthur secured a lease from the Railway Department for valuable frontage along Rodney Street, extending from the post office towards Harrison's building. The Main Highways Board had already sealed the road through the village, but between the new carriageway and the section where Arthur planned to build his shop lay a miniature gully.

Clearing the tea-tree, levelling the ground and filling in the approaches was no small task. It was all done by hand, using little more than a shovel and wheelbarrow, keeping the young chemist busy in his spare time. Eventually, the pharmacy moved from the Wellsford Chambers to Rodney Street, where it remained for many years.

ANNOUNCEMENT.—AT YOUR SERVICE.

—(.)—

A. R. Gorbey, M.P.S., Ph.C. (By Exam.)

DISPENSING, PHOTOGRAPHIC & VETERINARY CHEMIST
(Late Manager De Castro's Pharmacy, Paeroa)

Has opened an Up-to-date Pharmacy in the Wellsford Chambers, Wellsford.

New Stocks of fresh Drugs and Medicines as well as Toilet Specialities. Photographic Supplies and Cameras at City prices.

DEVELOPING AND PRINTING done promptly at reasonable prices.

Trusting that courteous and painstaking attention to Clients, wishes will merit your patronage.

A. R. GORBEY, M.P.S. Ph.C. ————— THE PHARMACY
WELLSFORD.

By the mid-1950s, official pharmacy records listed the business as A. R. Gorbey Ltd on Rodney Street. Arthur saw many changes during his twenty-seven years in Wellsford. In the early days, some residents did not quite realise that a dispensary was simply another shop. To be on the safe side, customers would sometimes knock on the open door and wait to be admitted!

Arthur's knowledge of drugs and their medicinal properties also meant that he was increasingly called upon to act as an unofficial veterinarian. On one particularly bleak day, he was huddled in his back room wearing an overcoat and trying to keep warm when a tremendous noise from the shop brought him to his feet. The culprit? A farmer had led his ailing horse right into the pharmacy!

Service on the spot!

Soon after arriving in Wellsford in 1931, Arthur married Oreti Brierly, the daughter of a Presbyterian minister. Her brother, William, lived in Tyburnia Place.

Arthur and Oreti had three children: Gordon, Maurice and Colleen. Gordon lived in Auckland but trained as a mechanic at C. M. Gordon's garage in Wellsford and later married Maureen Roderique of Wellsford.

Maurice followed his father into the pharmacy profession, qualifying as an M.P.S. and eventually taking over the family business. He married Joy Butler of Auckland. Daughter, Colleen, trained as a teacher and lived in Auckland. The Gorbey family also played a part in Wellsford's wider community life.

In the early days of the Plunket Committee, the main Plunket room was located in part of Arthur Gorbey's shop building. The same room may also have been used by dentists Shirley and Goldie Anderson, doctors Shaw and Morrison, Ron Whitmore and others. Following the opening of the new Culpan building in 1936, Plunket relocated to the basement there.

When Arthur retired to Mt Albert in 1958, his son Maurice took over the family pharmacy. The business continued as Maurice Gorbey Ltd, operating for many years at 156 Rodney Street.



From its humble beginnings during the depths of the Great Depression, the Gorbey pharmacy became a long-standing part of Wellsford's commercial history. Arthur Gorbey had arrived in a small settlement with little more than an opportunity and the determination to make it work.

Through hard work, good business sense and a willingness to serve his community—whether the customer arrived on two legs or four—he helped establish a business that would remain a familiar feature of Wellsford for generations.

Birthday Wishes for July

Wishing everyone who celebrated a birthday this month a very Happy Birthday! We hope you had a wonderful day surrounded by family, friends, and plenty of special moments. Here's wishing you all the very best for the year ahead.

A Happy Birthday to Rose Reid, Sandra Berry, Tricia Cox, Steph Treadwell, Lockie Reid.

The Curator's Chronicle

To Spend a Penny – The Story Behind Our Penny Lock

“I just need to spend a penny!”

It's a phrase many of us have heard, and some of us are even old enough to remember when you really did need to carry a penny if you wanted to use a public toilet while out shopping or travelling. But have you ever wondered where this curious expression came from?

The story begins in Victorian Britain. At the Great Exhibition of 1851, held at London's Crystal Palace, sanitary engineer George Jennings installed some of the first prominent public pay toilets. Visitors paid a penny to use the facilities, helping to cover the costs of attendants, cleaning and even providing a clean towel. Before long, “spend a penny” became a polite and rather charming way of saying that you needed to use the toilet.

The Penny Lock

During the Victorian era, coin-operated toilet door locks became increasingly common. In 1892, English inventor and stage magician John Nevil Maskelyne patented an automated coin-operated toilet lock. Insert your penny, slide the bolt, and the indicator changed from “Vacant” to “Engaged” – a very simple system, but one that became familiar in public conveniences throughout Britain and beyond. These sturdy brass and iron locks were manufactured by companies such as Lockerbie & Wilkinson in Britain and NIK-O-LOK in the United States. The pennies collected helped contribute towards the cleaning and maintenance of the facilities, which were sometimes looked after by an attendant.



A Penny for Women's Rights

Public toilets were also an important issue for women. In Auckland, women did not have access to dedicated public toilets until 1910 – nearly 40 years after men. Before this, women were often expected to use facilities in shops or simply wait until they got home.

When the Grafton Bridge opened, public toilets were provided with a dedicated section for women. However, the facilities were far from perfect. The entrance was inside the tram shelter, meaning women had to squeeze past people waiting for trams just to reach the loo. And, to add insult to injury, women had to pay a penny while the men's toilets were free!

By 1949, Auckland had just six public toilets for women compared with 20 for men. Women's facilities also had more restricted opening hours, particularly on Sundays, reflecting the assumption that women would be at home or at church rather than out and about.

Our Own Penny Lock

Here at the Albertland Heritage Museum, we have a wonderful little piece of this history in our collection. Our historic penny lock was removed from the toilet at the back of the Highway Tearooms some years ago and donated to the museum by Ivan Tomas – complete with a bag full of pennies!

The lock was manufactured by Gibbons of Wolverhampton, a company with a long history of producing locks

and hardware. Founded by James Gibbons in 1750, the family business continued for four generations, manufacturing a wide range of locks from its Wolverhampton factory.

<http://www.historywebsite.co.uk/Museum/locks/gazetteer/gazg.htm>

It may look like a small and rather ordinary piece of hardware, but our penny lock tells a much bigger story – one of Victorian ingenuity, public sanitation, engineering, changing social attitudes and the everyday lives of ordinary people.

So, the next time you hear someone say they need to “spend a penny,” remember the fascinating story behind those words. And if you visit the Albertland Heritage Museum, come and take a look at our own little piece of history – our very own penny lock!

Just remember to bring your penny!

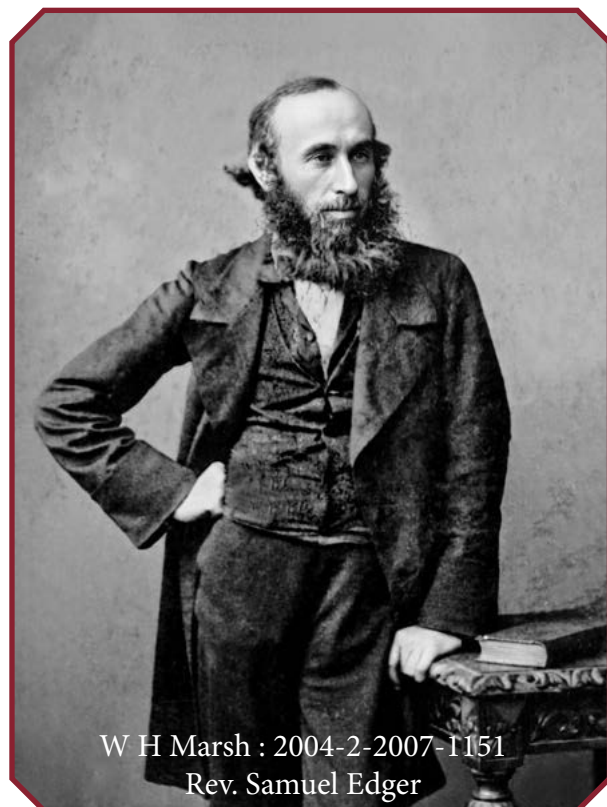


JOURNEY OF THE MATILDA WATTENBACH Continued

This month we continue the remarkable story of the Matilda Wattenbach as she battled the vast oceans on her long voyage to New Zealand with the Albertland settlers aboard.

When we last left the Matilda Wattenbach, she had just crossed the Equator and was pressing steadily south towards New Zealand. As the voyage continues, we turn once again to the diaries of the Rev. Samuel Edger and his twelve-year-old daughter, Marian Judson (née Edger). Through Marian's youthful observations, together

with her father's far more vivid and graphic account, we gain a glimpse into what was undoubtedly one of the most frightening stages of the voyage. Their words transport us aboard the ship, where towering seas, violent storms tested the courage of all those aboard.



W H Marsh : 2004-2-2007-1151
Rev. Samuel Edger

From Marian's diary: "When nearing the Cape of Good Hope the two ships (the Matilda Wattenbach and the Hanover which had left England together on the 29th of May) were widely separated. The Matilda Wattenbach being the faster, was in advance, and we ran into a very severe gale, which came up on Sunday evening, July 27. The day had been rainy and squally, but notwithstanding this, a fair number of people were attending service on the lower deck. The wind was howling and the ship rolling very heavily, when suddenly, without very much warning, a terrific squall struck her. Two of the topmasts were snapped off, and one spar crashed through the deck into some of the cabins."

From the graphic diary of the Rev. Samuel Edger, we find this even scarier account of the storm and its impact. "We had got half through a hymn when the ship gave a big lurch, and

down crashed one hundred human beings, men, women and children, pots and pans, innumerable kettles and

crookery ware, amid biscuits etc. The captain's orders were: "All hands-on deck; all passengers keep below!" Sounds well known at sea, and sufficiently ominous!

Not many minutes of suspense, for there through the main deck projects the end of a yardarm, two feet into the cabin below, where Mrs. Marcroft is just putting her child to bed! "A sudden squall had befallen the ship," continues Mr. Edger, "carrying down two-thirds of the mainmast yards. The church service was, of course, ended, and all was confusion. For half an hour we waited below, and then ventured above with Dr. Bell. Down close to our feet came smaller pieces torn from the mizzen mast. Feeling it safe, we went down to the saloon. Roll, roll, lurch, crash, crash! The mizzen topmast, with yards and sails, had gone; part of it on the very spot where we had been standing. The majority of the passengers were calm, but some of the ladies were pale and trembling; a few tears. Two hours of noise and confusion, with a dangling mast that goes thump, thump, every few seconds like cannon balls, beating in the ribs of poor Matilda! The sailors had worked like giants to clear the wreckage. The ship was in real and great danger. About half the unbroken mast was cut away and sacrificed to save us all, in view of the danger to life. Fortunately, the danger passed away about eleven pm But the night! Howling winds, deluging rain, such a creaking and groaning and banging! Then there was the hurried tramp of feet, and the shouting of voices."



W H Marsh : 2004-2-93-6
Marian Edger



The next morning Mr Edger wrote: "Poor Matilda, forlorn and dreary: no mainmast and no mizzen mast, except two pitiful stumps, and two sails alone, one on the foremast, still stripping themselves to the fury of the blast, blowing dead in our teeth – although the ship was one confused mass of broken masts and yards, torn sails and tangled ropes."

"The scene the following morning," writes Mrs Judson, "was desolate in the extreme. The gale had somewhat

abated, but all around was a wrathful waste of waters, and above, a dark, leaden sky; while the decks, strewn with debris and fragments of the fallen masts rolled and tumbled helplessly in the trough of the mountainous waves. We were unable to make headway, nor could the ship answer her helm. At one time a council was held to decide whether the ship should be taken into Cape Town for repairs, or jury masts should be rigged and an endeavour made to reach Auckland without assistance. The latter course was finally adopted, and after a delay of several days the ship, in a dismantled condition, was able to proceed on her journey."

The Matilda Wattenbach was afterwards named the Racehorse, and under that name she once again arrived in Auckland on July 8, 1868 with only the stumps of her masts standing. This time she started from Gravesend she had to put into Falmouth for repairs and then as she was away to the south of the Australian Bight, she struck a terrific storm that brought down all her upper spars, and caused chaos on board.

The clearing away of the wreckage on this journey was made all the more difficult owing to the continued bad

weather. Unfortunately, a crew member, known as a boatswain was also washed out of the main rigging and drowned. Eventually the Racehorse once again limped into Auckland harbour after 102 days at sea

At the museum we have what is thought to be a small piece of the mast from this incredible journey of the Matilda Wattenbach. When gifted to the museum it was explained that pieces of the mast were taken by the passengers as a memento of this part of their voyage and since its arrival at the museum, we have learnt of two other pieces still held by the descendants of Albertland families, one being a framed 3D model of the Matilda Wattenbach using the wood fragment as its bow.

“New Zealand was described as a Paradise or fairyland – an illusion that was rudely dispelled when the first settlers were landed at Port Albert and Paparoa.”

Those poignant words, written years later, remind us of the enormous gap between the settlers' expectations and the reality that awaited them. Yet, at this point in the journey, the passengers aboard the Matilda Wattenbach still looked ahead with hope, excitement and dreams of the new life that lay before them

Join us in August for their arrival in Auckland and the incredible trip to their new home in Albertland.

(This information has been taken from “The Albertlanders – Brave Pioneers of the 1860s” by Sir Henry Brett & Henry Hook) and is available for purchase through our Albertland Heritage Museum website for \$90 + pp

<https://albertlandmuseum.co.nz/product/the-albertlanders-brave-pioneers-of-the-1860s/>



The poster features a photograph of the Albertland Heritage Centre building with a red roof and a white facade. A red flag with the word 'OPEN' is on the left. In front of the building is a large mural depicting a group of people in 19th-century attire. Below the photo, the text 'Albertland Heritage Museum' is written in a cursive font, followed by 'AGM' in large, bold, blue letters. To the left of the date, there are three icons: a calendar, a location pin, and a coffee cup. To the right, there is a small image of a steamship. At the bottom, there is a dark blue box with a gold circle containing 'RSVP' and contact information.

Albertland Heritage Museum
AGM

SUNDAY
13TH SEPTEMBER 2026
AT 1.00PM

TO BE HELD AT
WELLSFORD RSA
1 OLYMPUS ROAD, WELLSFORD

AFTERNOON TEA
PROVIDED

TALK BY STEAM BOAT SPECIALIST
Sean Harris
ABOUT BOATING ON THE KAIPARA HARBOUR

BY 11TH SEPTEMBER 2026
TO MUSEUM SECRETARY
albertlandmuseum@gmail.com
09 423 8181

We look forward to seeing you there!

Quotation for July

While not a quotation as such, this delightful little poem is the perfect pick-me-up for these long winter days.

Written by Mary Oliver, one of America's most celebrated poets, it reflects her remarkable ability to find profound meaning in the natural world and the quiet moments of everyday life. Known for her clear, deeply observant poetry about nature, animals, and the human spirit, Oliver was awarded both the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize during her distinguished career.

Her much-loved poem *I Worried* gently reminds us to let go of anxious over thinking and instead embrace the beauty and peace of the present moment—a message that feels especially welcome during the quieter days of winter.

I Worried

Mary Oliver

I worried a lot. Will the garden grow, will the rivers
flow in the right direction, will the earth turn
as it was taught, and if not how shall
I correct it?

Was I right, was I wrong, will I be forgiven,
can I do better?

Will I ever be able to sing, even the sparrows
can do it and I am, well,
hopeless.

Is my eyesight fading or am I just imagining it,
am I going to get rheumatism,
lockjaw, dementia?

Finally I saw that worrying had come to nothing.
And gave it up. And took my old body
and went out into the morning,
and sang.

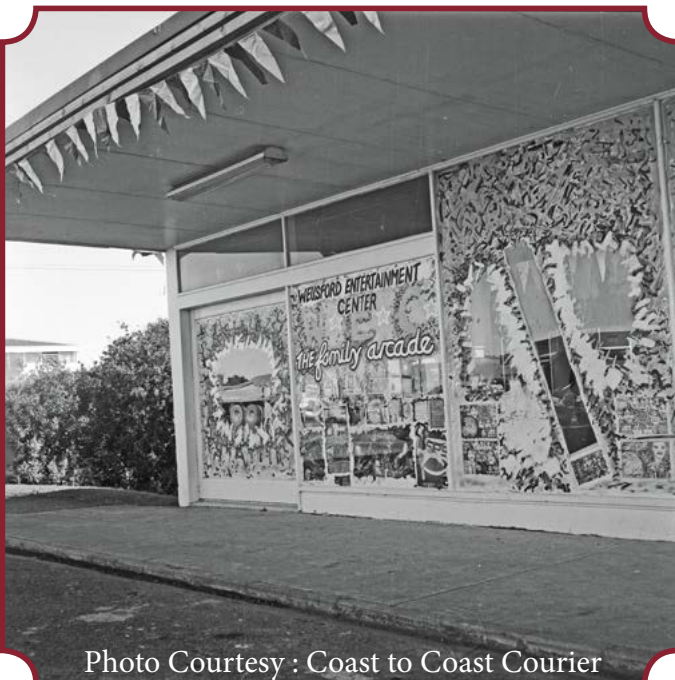


Photo Courtesy : Coast to Coast Courier

Who remembers the

Wellsford Entertainment Center?

the family arcade

Let us know the location and
what year did this appear in
Wellsford ?

PIC OF THE MONTH

This month we've been delving into a wonderful collection of photographs from the Coast to Coast newspaper, a much-loved local publication that was delivered throughout the district from 1988 to 2001. One thing is certain – this collection is full of hidden gems.

This month's photograph is a reminder that what truly makes a small town special isn't just its buildings or businesses, but the people who become part of its story.

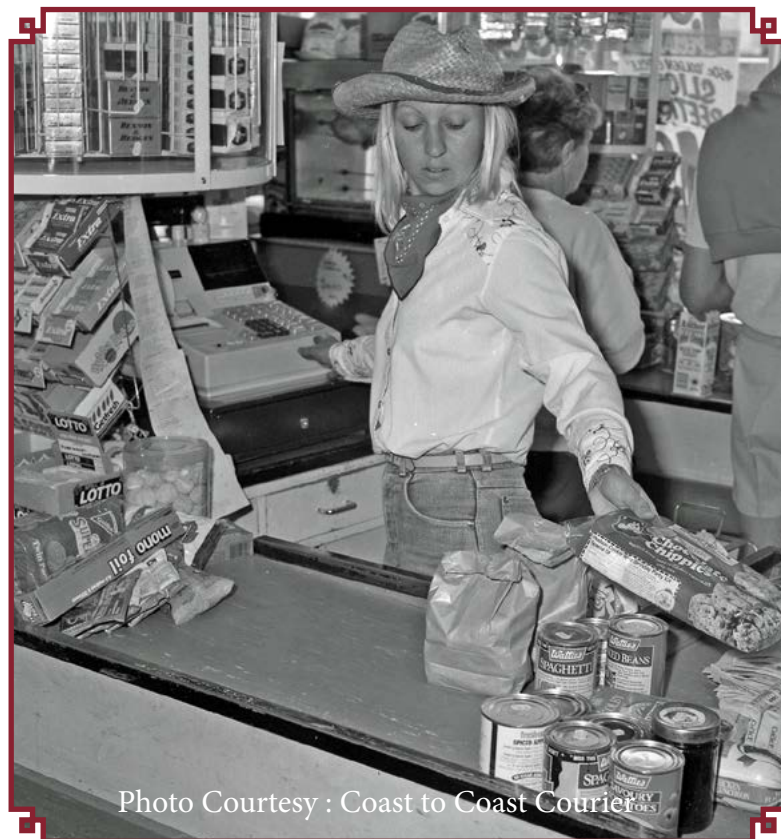


Photo Courtesy : Coast to Coast Courier

One of those people is Bonnie.

Since leaving school, Bonnie has been a familiar face in Wellsford, working in retail and hospitality for (dare I say it) a number of decades. Many of you will remember her from the local Four Squares, McDonald's, and various cafés over the years.

Today, you'll find her front and centre at Peppers Café, where she continues to greet customers with the same warmth and friendly smile that has made her such a well-known and much-loved local.

If you're in town, pop into Peppers Café and say hello. Be sure to tell Bonnie you spotted her in the July edition of the Albertland Heritage Museum newsletter!

She'll welcome you like an old friend—and while you're there, treat yourself to one of her excellent coffees.

What's On

2nd August 2026 – Barbara Lane 'Step Up Challenge' – We wish our volunteer Barbara all the very best for this challenge to raise money for Blood Cancer NZ.

9th August 2026 – Port Albert Community Church Service – 1.30pm at Church Hill Road, Port Albert. Please bring a plate.

13th September 2026 – Albertland Heritage Museum AGM – 1pm at Wellsford RSA, 1 Olympus Road, Wellsford. Guest speaker Sean Harris – talking about the Boats on the Kaipara Harbour

If you haven't been to the museum for a while, bring your family in for a visit.
Shared Threads Quilting Exhibition still on – **closing date 31st August 2026.**

Flier for quilting exhibition is at the end of this newsletter

Hoteo North Hall – A Small Hall with a Big History

Museum volunteers had another opportunity to be out and about in the community on Saturday 25th July, helping celebrate the grand re-opening of the Hoteo North Hall.

With our extensive archives, the Hall Committee invited us to help showcase some of the rich history of this little hall on State Highway 16. As it turned out, however, many of those who gathered were themselves a wealth of knowledge, with local residents and invited guests sharing fascinating memories and stories of the district throughout the afternoon.

Reading the delightful book *On a Saturday Night* reminded me of a story about a local lad who rode his motorbike into the hall during a dance in the late 1940s. It immediately brought back a tale my father-in-law, Max Reid, often told. He and two of his cousins had ridden their motorbikes to the hall one evening and, on a spur-of-the-moment dare, decided to ride one inside just to see how many girls they could make jump onto their chairs and scream!

By all accounts, the plan worked perfectly. Harmless fun or a rather dangerous prank? Perhaps a bit of both—but it certainly makes for a wonderful reminder of the carefree antics and colourful characters that have become part of our local history. Many more stories of days gone by were shared throughout the afternoon, reminding everyone that halls like this are much more than buildings; they are repositories of community memories. From Schoolhouse to Community Hall.

Although Hoteo North Hall now sits quietly about five kilometres south of Wellsford, the district was once a thriving rural community. In 1883, Wellsford itself did not yet exist in its present form, and Hoteo North was an important centre for the surrounding farming district.

The building began life as the Hoteo North School. In January 1883, a tender of £290 was accepted from George Totterdell Hartnell, a Port Albert boatbuilder. Hartnell was born in 1837 at Bishop's Hull, Somerset, England, and arrived in New Zealand aboard the *Hanover* on 29 May 1862 as one of the Albertland settlers. Besides establishing himself as a respected local boatbuilder, he was also responsible for constructing both the Hoteo North and Wharehine Schools.

George married Emma Sturch at Hakeru, and together they raised six children—George, Frank, Evered, Alfred, Winifred and Effie. He was an active member of the district, serving on numerous committees and becoming well known for his prize-winning vegetables exhibited at local shows.

A Thriving Rural Community

During its early years, Hoteo North was far busier than many people realise. The settlement included a general store, blacksmith's shop, boarding house, church, post office and library, tennis club and golf club, most of them situated just south of present-day Wayby Station Road.

As more families settled in the district during the 1870s, the need for a local school became apparent. A school reserve was granted in April 1877, and the new school officially opened on 29 April 1883.

Built from kauri with a steeply pitched shingle roof, the school featured a large open fireplace and a front porch that would later become a kitchen. The original shingle roof was eventually replaced with corrugated iron, while modern toilet facilities have since been added to the rear of the building.

The school grounds were once beautifully maintained, complete with fencing, a stile, colourful red and mauve roses, and later a flourishing school garden.

Education and Community Spirit

For a period during the 1920s the school operated as a "half-time school", opening only on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. As enrolments increased, it returned to full-time operation, educating children through to Home

Standard Six before they sat their Proficiency Examinations.

At its peak the school roll reached 34 pupils, but over time numbers declined. Eventually, with the establishment of Wellsford District High School, many smaller country schools consolidated and Hoteo North School closed its doors.

The building, however, remained at the heart of community life.

It hosted dances, concerts and 21st birthday celebrations, while during the First World War it became a venue for patriotic fundraising events such as flag euchres. During the Second World War, it took on a more sombre role as local families gathered to farewell young men leaving to serve overseas. Nearby, the tennis and golf clubs were also popular social hubs that brought the community together.

Saving a Local Landmark

Following the school's closure, the Minister of Education approved the building's use as a public hall. In 1955 the former Rodney County Council assumed responsibility for it as a District Hall, while the school reserve became Crown land.

By the 1990s, however, the future of the hall looked uncertain. Rodney District Council was reviewing its portfolio of small rural halls and the old school building faced the very real possibility of demolition and redevelopment.

Fortunately, a determined group of Hoteo North residents refused to let that happen.

Working alongside supportive councillors and their local Member of Parliament, they discovered that ownership of the property was actually vested with the Department of Conservation. Lengthy negotiations between the Department of Conservation and Rodney District Council eventually resulted in a landmark achievement.

In January 2003, ownership of the building was transferred to the Hoteo North School Society Incorporated, while the surrounding land was leased to the Society for a nominal annual rental.

A New Chapter

The year 2023 marked another turning point, with renewed enthusiasm to preserve both the hall and its surrounding reserve. The Hoteo North Reserve and Hall Incorporated Society was formed, bringing together a dedicated group of local volunteers committed to restoring the grounds and breathing new life into this historic community asset.

Working alongside Auckland Council and the Rodney Local Board, volunteers have transformed the reserve into an attractive and welcoming space once again. Today the hall is once more a vibrant community hub, while the grounds continue to be home to the successful Albertland Pony Club.

The committee continues to maintain the buildings and reserve through regular working bees, planting days and community events. The hall and grounds are available for hire, membership is open to everyone, and the committee warmly welcomes new supporters.

For bookings, membership enquiries or to become involved, contact:

hoteonorthreserveandhall@gmail.com

The Little Post Office

Hidden behind the hall is another fascinating piece of Hoteo North's history—the former post office and library building.

Opened in 1876, this tiny building once played an important role in connecting



the scattered rural community. Local resident Gordon Levet recalls his father collecting mail from Whakapirau, northwest of present-day Wellsford, and delivering it to Hoteo North on horseback. The post office remained in operation until 1914 before eventually finding a new life as the district's sports shed.

Like the hall itself, this humble little building stands as a reminder of a time when small rural communities relied upon one another, and when places like Hoteo North were bustling centres of everyday life.

We would like to acknowledge Linda MacDonald for providing an amazing written account of the Hoteo North Hall's history, Albertland Heritage Museum archives and 'On a Saturday Night: Community halls of small-town New Zealand' by Michele Frey and Sara Newman, with photographs by John Maillard and John O'Malley

Matariki Fun at Te Hana!

What a great day we had on Friday 10 July when a group of our volunteers joined in the fun at the Matariki Day celebrations at Te Hana Te Ao Marama!

Everything had been arranged for us, and the Auckland Council Play Trailer had been dropped off the day before, ready for us to take charge. We arrived bright and early and opened the trailer door—only to discover boxes and boxes of every type of play equipment imaginable!

We set up cricket and badminton on the lawn, along with frisbees, tennis bats, noughts and crosses, and so much more. Inside the wharenuī, we created an exciting indoor play area with climbing equipment, tunnels, soft balls and plenty of other activities.



Spectrum Care Group from Warkworth



It certainly looked like fun—and it wasn't long before the children arrived and started making the most of it! Soon there were kids running, climbing, throwing, laughing and playing everywhere, doing exactly what they were supposed to be doing on this magical day: having fun!

Inside the wharenuī we had the pleasure of meeting some very special visitors from Spectrum Care in Warkworth. After enjoying the activities and soaking up the atmosphere, they gathered with their wonderful caregivers for this lovely group photo. It was a pleasure to meet you all,

and we hope to see you again soon!

By lunchtime, the delicious smell of the hangi was filling the air, and everyone attending was treated to a free hangi pack, along with the other tasty food choices on offer.

After a few more hours of fun and games, the day sadly came to an end. But little did we know, the hardest part was yet to come...



Assistants on the day
Peter M, Peter B, Rose R, Rachel C

Repacking the trailer!

We had to put everything back exactly as we had found it, and as we looked at the mountain of equipment, it seemed impossible that it would all fit back inside. Somehow, we managed to do a pretty good job—but I'm sure the wonderful Auckland Council staff may have had to do a little rearranging when they opened the door again!

A huge thank you to our wonderful volunteers who helped out on the day: Sandra, Peter Buckton, Peter Marsh, Rose Reid, Pauline and Tayler Stables.

We had a fantastic day and were delighted to be part of such a wonderful Matariki celebration. We hope to see you all back next year for another day of fun!

Mānawatia a Matariki

Out and About in the Community

We have certainly been busy out in the community this month!

During the third week of July each year, our volunteers assist the Wellsford Horticultural Society with their popular Annual Soup Lunch. Once again, it was a wonderful event, with a great turnout and an impressive selection of delicious homemade soups and desserts prepared by club members.



Our role was to serve the meals and keep the dishes washed, and in return the club generously supports our museum with a fundraising donation. Opportunities like this make a real difference in helping to keep the Albertland Heritage Museum running, and we are extremely grateful for their ongoing support.

This year's guest speaker was Max Wintle from the Peach Patch, who gave a fascinating demonstration on pruning fruit trees. There were a few audible gasps from the audience as some rather dramatic cuts were made, but Max assured everyone that the results would be well worth it!

A heartfelt thank you to the Wellsford Horticultural Society for inviting us to be part of such a successful event. It was a pleasure to help, and to anyone with an interest in gardening, we can highly recommend joining this friendly and knowledgeable local club.

To find out more: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/655057106064796>



NEW QUILTING EXHIBITION

Shared Threads

OPENING
28th June - 31st December

Come along and see
the work of local group
'Friday Crafters'

 Wed - Sat
11 - 3 pm

 Sun
1 - 3 pm

Albertland Heritage Museum
Library Plaza
15 Port Albert Road
Wellsford
Phone 09 423 8181

