PROSPECT

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Farewell to the Epsom & Eden District Historical Society

A fond goodbye to a quarter-century of preserving our past

In early 2026, the Epsom & Eden District Historical Society Inc. (EEDHS) will formally wind up after twenty-five years of dedicated service to its community. Its closure marks the end of an era for one of Auckland's most vibrant and collegial local historical societies—a group that helped generations of residents see their familiar streets, schools, and volcanic slopes through the lens of history.

Beginnings: friendship and vision

The Society was founded in 2000 by two university friends—the late Dr Helen Laurenson and Valerie Sherwood—who shared a deep love of history and a determination to see the stories of Epsom and Mount Eden more widely known and celebrated. From their friendship grew a clear purpose: to research, record, and share the past of these distinctive inner Auckland suburbs, and to raise public awareness of their heritage value.

The inaugural officers were Helen Laurenson as president, Val Sherwood as vice president, Natalie Taplin as secretary, and Jeanette Grant as treasurer. Their early meetings were marked by enthusiasm, curiosity, and cups of tea—the ingredients of a society that would thrive for a quarter of a century.

Leadership and continuity

Over the years, the Society enjoyed a remarkable continuity of leadership. Presidents have included Helen Laurenson, Christine Black, David Pittman, and most recently Eric Laurenson. Secretarial duties passed from Natalie Taplin to Margaret Barriball, and latterly to Louise Richardson. The treasurer's role was first held by Jeanette Grant, then Frank Trainer, and most recently Brian Allen.

Following the loss of President Helen Laurenson in 2021, a somewhat dispirited executive committee was encouraged by new vice president,

Helen Taber, to pick up the reins with new vigour and she secured a comprehensive list of speakers for us over the next few years.

For many years the Society alternated regular meetings with outings, encouraging members to explore their neighbourhood's built and natural heritage. That blend of learning and camaraderie became the hallmark of EEDHS—part seminar, part walking club, part circle of friends.

One name stands out across the decades: Jeanette Grant, who has edited every issue of the Society's annual journal, *Prospect*, since its inception. Her meticulous editing, supported by a dedicated team of proofreaders, has given the Society a consistent voice and a legacy of scholarship that will serve historians well into the future.

Publications and projects

With the help of the design and printing knowledge of John Denny of Puriri Press, the society produced not only 25 annual issues of *Prospect* magazine, but also two landmark books that stand as enduring contributions to Auckland's local history: *The History of Epsom* (2006), edited by Dr Graham Bush, a richly illustrated reference work tracing the suburb's growth, people, and institutions, and *The History of Mount Eden—the district and its people* (2019), edited by Dr Helen Laurenson, a major companion volume exploring Māori heritage, colonial life, and the suburb's cultural evolution. Alongside these, *Prospect* blossomed into a respected annual journal, filled with carefully researched essays and personal stories that gave voice to the district's character and change.

The Society also collaborated with the Greenwoods Corner Business Association and the Albert–Eden Local Board to develop the Greenwoods Corner Historical Walk—a self-guided tour linking research with the living streetscape, allowing walkers to step through time in the heart of Epsom.

Celebrating the past, enriching the present

While EEDHS often profiled historic figures such as Ellen Melville, John Logan Campbell, Oliver Nicholson, and Mary Ellen Bews, it did so not because they were members, but because their lives illuminated the development of Epsom and Mount Eden. Through its talks, walks, and

publications, the Society helped the community see its surroundings not just as geography, but as narrative — an unfolding story of people, ideas, and change.

The challenge of time

Like many volunteer organisations, the Society has faced the realities of an ageing membership and the shifting nature of community life. After thoughtful discussion, members agreed it was time to bring this chapter to a close.

Researchers and heritage enthusiasts will be pleased to know that the Society's assets and archives will pass into the care of the Mount Albert Historical Society, ensuring that its records, photographs and publications remain preserved and accessible for generations to come. A lasting legacy across twenty-five years, the EEDHS leaves behind:

Two definitive local histories of Epsom and Mount Eden

Twenty-five volumes of *Prospect*

Public projects like the Greenwoods Corner Walk

A tradition of meetings, outings, and warm fellowship

And a deeper public appreciation of our shared heritage

In gratitude

As Epsom and Mount Eden continue to evolve, the Society's influence endures—in its books, in the plaques along Greenwoods Corner, and in the countless conversations it began about who we are and where we come from. To the founders, the late Helen Laurenson and Valerie Sherwood; to every president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, editor, and member who gave time, thought, and heart thank you. Your dedication has ensured that the story of this community is not lost, but lovingly recorded.

Though the Society now winds up, its spirit lives on — in its archives, in the footsteps of its walks, and in the simple act of pausing on a familiar street and wondering, "What happened here before us?" Kia ora, and farewell — a legacy well written, and well loved.

Eric Laurenson

Bugs, beetles and beetroot

by Cynthia Landels

For over 30 years, from October 1991 to April 2022, these featured in the lives of Cavell Girl Guides. Service to others has always been an integral part of the Girl Guide Programme, and a garden project was suggested in 1991. We had been looking for something that was not just tokenism, but a project with commitment. At that time foodbanks were just beginning, and the suggestion was made that perhaps the Guides could grow vegetables for the Auckland City Mission Foodbank. An approach was made to the vicar of St Andrew's Church, Epsom, and he said the Guides could use three square metres of the church land. And so the garden began, behind where the old chook house had been, until it burnt down. The project began with the Guides clearing the area. Removing the agapanthus and other weeds was challenging. The asphalt that was under part of the garden was also removed.

Where the garden began

That summer carrots, lettuce, beetroot, dwarf beans and silver beet were sent to the City Mission. Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and leeks were then planted for the winter.

By June 1992 the Guides ran out of weeds, so with time to spare for a good turn, decided to weed part of the vicar's vegetable garden. The vicar thanked them and as he was moving in September, told the Guides they could continue using the garden. As some subsequent vicars did not enjoy gardening, they were happy for the Guides to continue using what had been the Vicarage vegetable garden. The Guides cleared, fertilized and planted it in potatoes among other vegetables.

New area dug and rotary hoed

The second summer, four sacks of potatoes and 26 pounds of beans were sent to the mission as well as beetroot, broccoli, radishes and lettuces. And so the garden was under way. In June 1994 the church was employing periodic detention boys and they dug up four new areas and rotary hoed them, bringing the garden to the size it is today.

Working with Guides is challenging fun. They scream at bugs or rescue one when someone is going to squash it. One Guide was terrified when she met an earthworm face to face. Something, a bee or wasp, flies past their head and they scream and run away. They either hate getting soil on their hands or go to the other extreme, make mud pies and have a mud fight. Told to watch where they were walking because the potatoes were just coming though, one very surprised Guide wanted to know if potatoes had tops. Guides are not very good at understanding instructions, and that is a challenge. How many ways can one describe a trowel before one gets one? And where is the beetroot? In the compost bin, and the leaves were ready to go to the Mission. While they garden, Guides talk. One soon knows which teachers are popular and which are not.

There have been problems over the years. At one stage there was an escaped rabbit with a liking for lettuce. And one vicar's dog mastered the art of digging up potatoes, which it promptly ate. Wire netting and waratah stakes fixed this problem, keeping the dog out.

Hungry birds have been at work!

Some winters the birds pecked holes in the silver beet and cabbage leaves, which necessitated having netting to prevent them shredding the leaves completely. Of course, there are always slugs and snails. Snail traps have been used, using beer. Nothing quite like drowning in your favourite tipple. Caterpillars have also featured largely, as well as aphid at times.

Digital control (squashing) for the first and soapy water for the second was the solution. A bicarbonate of soda spray controlled the powdery mildew on cucurbits.

The garden is organic in the sense that no chemical sprays are used. (The Guides could not afford them anyway.) Chemical sprays kill all the beneficial bugs as well as the nasties. If one has read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson, one would never use chemical sprays again. Consequently, weeds are removed by hand. This is labour intensive, as removing oxalis, onion weed and the always creeping and spreading buttercup takes time. There are also plenty of other weeds which sprout and try to take over.

The vegetables grown were those which are easy to grow and require little attention, as the Guides were in the garden only one day a week. Crops over the years have included dwarf and runner beans, cucumber, courgette, lettuce, spring onion, beetroot, carrots, potatoes including tutaekuri (Māori potato), celery, pumpkins, radish, leeks, silver beet, rhubarb, corn, and kumara.

One week's crop

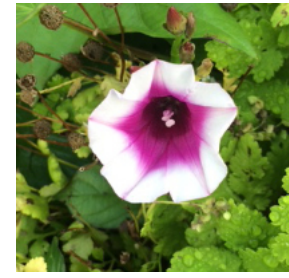
For 27 years the Guides grew cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli, but in 2018 a disease called club root attacked the plants, resulting in cauliflowers as big as a 20cent piece. Cabbages and broccoli were also dwarfed. As there is no cure, the garden diversified into onions and broad beans.

Each season is different. The weather plays a huge part in how well crops grow. Large cabbages and cauliflowers were grown one year and the next year they were mediocre. One year, sprouted seed pota-

Club root

toes rotted in the ground. Beans seeds were planted three times before any beans grew another time. Kumara could vary year to year, one year small and the next year huge! And one year the kumara plants flowered.

A large kumara



Kumara flower

Over the years, as well as companion planting of feverfew and calendula, coffee grounds have been added to the compost. Experiments were carried out. Tomatoes were planted by potatoes (not a good idea), by corn, and by themselves. Those growing by the corn had larger fruit overall, but ultimately all plants developed blight. This is why tomatoes were not grown again.

Carrots were planted normally and also with coffee grounds mixed with the seeds, to see if it prevented carrot fly. There was no evidence of carrot fly in either crop, but the ones planted with coffee grounds either had split roots or very short roots. That was not tried again. Corn and beans grown together works well. As soon as corn is about 30cm high, plant climbing beans beside them.

Also, a large very triffid-like kiwifruit vine was removed, and three citrus, two mandarins and a lemon were planted in its place. These are now bearing very well.

The garden has compost bins which have been donated, as have many of the tools. Over the years, compost has been bought as well as NPK fertiliser, lime and animal manure. Mini cloches to protect seedlings were made from lemonade bottles. Flowers such as gladioli, fennel (the seeds are harvested), parsley and borage are grown to attract the bees. An irrigation system was installed thanks to the generosity of the Epsom Rotary Club.

A barrowload of veggies
Photo; NZ Herald

The Guides have worked on a roster system, three or four of them spending an hour each week. This has meant them doing one hour about twice a term. During the 30 years, over 200 Guides have taken part. Over 90 of them over their time at Guides, which is between three and four years, have done over twenty hours each. When the garden started, Guides were aged ten to fourteen years. For the last ten years the ages were changed, and Guides are now aged between nine and twelve and a half years. This has had implications in that the Guides were now not strong enough to dig.

Part of the garden with a scarecrow

Over the years the Guides have made scarecrows with such fascinating names as Esmeralda, Bruce Pierre and Bluebell, among others. Apart from scaring birds, the scarecrows also provided homes for slugs, snails, beetles and other bugs, which meant the bugs were not out and about eating lettuces, hopefully.

The Guide Unit has won two awards for their efforts. In 1993 Cavell Guides won the Olave Award. This is given by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, which has Guides in 153 countries and a membership of 11.2 million. It is named to honour the memory of the World Chief Guide, the late Lady Baden-Powell. It is given annually to a group within Guiding for meeting the needs of a country by sustained effort. This is the only time New Zealand has won the award, as it usually goes to third world countries.


THE WORLD ASSOCIATION
OF GIRL GUIDES AND GIRL SCOUTS
The Olave Award
to honour the memory of the World Chief Guide, Olave, Lady Baden Powell,
and given in recognition of outstanding service to the community
The Olave Award 1993 is presented to:
1st Auckland (Cavell) Guide Unit
The Girl Guides Association New Zealand (Inc)
Chairman World Committee
Director World Bureau

The second award, the Commonwealth Youth Service Award, was awarded in 1998 and brought with it £1000. This enabled the Guides to build a garden shed and trellises for beans and blackberries.

The publicity from these awards resulted in the Guides appearing on the Palmer's Garden Show with Rudd Kleinpaste and appearing in the *NZ Herald*. There was also an article in *NZ Gardener* magazine. All this has led to the establishment of many more school and community gardens, which were few and far between back in the nineties. As well, the Guide


Commonwealth Youth Programme
COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT
REGIONAL YOUTH SERVICE AWARD
(SOUTH PACIFIC REGION)
awarded to
First Auckland, Cavell Girl Guide Company
in recognition of outstanding contributions to the development of society
Presented by the
Commonwealth Youth Programme - South Pacific Centre
1998
Regional Director - South Pacific Region
COMMONWEALTH YOUTH PROGRAMME SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL CENTRE P.O. BOX 1861 HONIARA SI

leader who ran the garden for over 30 years was the Auckland Gardener of the Year in 2010.

One year the Guides entered the appropriate section of the Easter Show. They did not win. They were told their entry was too professional!

This would not have been possible without the support of many generous donors. Turner's Garden Centre (unsaleable seedlings which the Guides revived); Living Earth (discounted compost until they became a wholesale company); Peter (who grew seedlings while unemployed); St Andrew's Church (for paying for the water used for irrigation, a compost bin and of course the use of the land); Epsom Rotary Club (for the irrigation system and a $500 donation); the Randerson family (the water tank); the Caughey family (cobblestones for paths and edging); and Gordon Attwood (who looked after the garden during part of the first Covid lockdown).

In conclusion, this has been a worthwhile project, as the Guide Unit has been a regular supplier of fresh vegetables to the Auckland City Mission

for over 30 years. As well, many Guides have learned enough to start their own vegetable gardens at home. They all enjoyed it. And it was a plus for St Andrew's, as they have had part of their land looked after.

St Andrew's Church took over the garden in April 2022 and are continuing to run it as a community garden, still supplying the Auckland City Mission with fresh vegetables.

The accelerating speed of change

My father Reay Clarke (1902–86) used to say that there had been more inventions and change in his lifetime than in any previous generation. However, things have continued to speed up. In just the last 25 years (since the EEDHS was founded), there have been innumerable inventions which we now take for granted. Here are just a few examples: 2000 flash drives, Blue-Ray, hybrid cars and GPS; 2001 Wikipedia; 2003 Skype; 2004 Facebook and Google; 2005 Google Maps and You Tube; 2006 Twitter; 2007 Kindles, smartphones, iPhones; 2009 Bitcoin and 3D printing; 2012 driverless cars . . . and so on . . . . *Jeanette Grant*

Establishing a private press in Epsom

by John Denny

Through a series of chance encounters the world of printing became a major focus of my life, the seeds being sown at different times and from various sources. As a child I was long fascinated by the paraphernalia on display in the shops of the two stationers in Te Awamutu. In one of my childhood browsing sessions, I came across something called a John Bull Printing Outfit, a set of rubber types comprising the capital letters of the alphabet, associated punctuation marks and numerals, with a little wooden type holder and an inkpad (see Prospect Vol 22 page 70 for further details). This was my first experience of the arcane pleasures of movable type.

Later, at intermediate school, I met a boy who had a passing interest in printing, and he introduced me to the hectograph which consisted of a large pad made from a gelatinous substance (generally gelatine dissolved in warmed glycerine, poured into a flat dish slightly larger than the paper intended for printing, and allowed to cool and set). Using a special ink on glossy paper the text, with or without illustration, was prepared. The inks came in a few different colours, but a dark purple seemed to give the strongest result and was often the default. The ink was allowed to dry, and then the sheet was lain face-down on the hectograph pad and carefully smoothed flat. After peeling it off, a reverse image of the work had been absorbed by the pad, whereupon sheets of blank paper, likewise smoothed gently on to the surface, came away with the image quite clearly printed on them. We found that between 10–20 prints could be taken before the ink became too faint. It was then possible to clean the hectograph's surface and re-use it, though I don't remember how this was done. We made a couple of issues of a class newsletter by this process.

Thereafter printing slipped from consciousness for many years as I grappled with the demands of high school, holiday jobs, and university study. So it wasn't until 1973, my first year as a primary school teacher, that printing was once again brought to front of mind. My school principal was Elwyn Richardson, a name well known in teaching circles, and I was most fortunate to have him as my mentor. Elwyn believed firmly in the creative ability of children, and this philosophy guided his approach to the

classroom. One day he came into my class, a Form One, and took a lesson based on a poem taken from one of the school journals. Sitting unobtrusively at the back of the room, I was as caught up in the discussion as the children, and was captivated by seeing Elwyn demonstrate his mastery, gently coaxing ideas from the class before putting the children to work producing their own written responses in the white heat of the moment. When I read their work later, it was at a whole new level compared with the kinds of results I'd been able to elicit as their teacher.

Subsequently, a week or so later, Elwyn reappeared in the classroom carrying a table-top flat-bed proofing press. He found a location for this, along with a tray of type, on a couple of spare desks. He then sat down with two children, asking them to bring their writing from the demonstration lesson of the previous week, and proceeded to quietly show them how to set type for one of their pieces in a small chase (the steel frame into which a block of type is locked for printing). After a while he left them to get on with it. My contribution was to allow the children to keep at it in the background as much as was practicable while still keeping up with most of their ordinary class work.

When they'd each had a chance to complete the task, Elwyn returned to show them how to ink the type and operate the press. I asked them to print enough copies for each class member, with a few over, so that at the end of the year we'd be able to put together a class magazine incorporating each child's printed contribution. They in turn showed the next two children the ropes; and so, throughout the rest of the year, Form One's magazine gradually took shape. I wasn't super-involved with the technicalities of all this, as the children were smart and motivated, and the operation of the press seemed to keep going almost under its own momentum. However the next year, when I was posted to a small school in south Taranaki, I missed the type and its language incentive, but continued to produce magazines of children's writing using the school banda (a kind of cousin to the hectograph, being a methylated spirit-based method of printing multiple copies from a hand-written master). We experimented with rubber type, but gave it up as unsatisfactory.

When in 1975 I was appointed to a school in Mangere, Auckland, I contacted Elwyn to ask him how I might go about getting a press and type

of my own, so that real printing could continue to be a feature of my classroom. He got back to me with the information that the wife of a Tamaki dentist was selling an Adana 8x5 (a tabletop platen[1] press) and six cases of type. I got in touch with her, and the transaction was made. Suddenly there I was, the proud owner of a little press with a useful selection of type and an assortment of spacing material—the importance of which I had yet to appreciate. (When you think about it, you realise that when using this technology, for every character you see on the printed page there are also many unseen metal pieces keeping the words separate and filling out short lines so as to make a uniform rectangular block which can be locked tightly into a "forme"[2] inside a "chase", which can be lifted up and put into a printing press. There was so much to learn.

Thus printing began again in my classroom, and because the little Adana was so light and portable I began to take it home in the weekends, printing quaint cards mainly for my own and friends' amusement. At the end of that year my senior colleague again intervened, this time offering me a large, ancient floor-standing Arab platen press at a giveaway price ($30 I think he asked for it). I naturally accepted, and shortly thereafter the machine arrived at my Windmill Road flat on a Hiab (a truck with a flat bed and a built-in crane) and was gently dropped at the top of the drive. It took my brother, a friend and myself a whole morning to move it ten feet into a space under the house. Because the press was too large to go through the narrow doorway it had to be partially dismantled (ie a large flywheel removed) and reassembled, no easy task when you don't really know what you're doing.

This much larger machine was operated by a foot treadle, and had its own built-in inking system, so was much faster and could print a larger sheet. I continued to print mainly cards, but also certificates and the like for school purposes, the odd invitation or small poster for friends, plus the programmes for concerts of the Orlando Singers, a small singing group I belonged to. Matters continued thus for a further couple of years, as I gradually picked up various printing techniques. My first paid job was producing letterheads for a local Mt Eden stationer, and what a struggle it was to find enough spacing material to lock everything together and produce the finished article. The final result was quite good, though.

Arab printing press arriving at 37 Margot Street, August 1978

By the time the next major development came I had married and shifted into our present address in Margot Street where I had a whole garage at my disposal for printing (the car had to live outside—eventually beneath a carport built later on).

A few months after the move to Margot Street the *Auckland Star* ran an article on its new computerised printing methods which were to displace the now outdated Linotype[3] machines. On the off-chance I rang Elwyn to alert him to the situation, and through his help and contacts we each arranged to buy a Linotype machine (mine cost me $400). These were delivered in early January 1979, and this meant that in addition to using hand set type, I could now cast my own, line by line as the name suggests, and never run out of characters, which was always a potential issue with hand type.

Linotype arrival, January 1979

It took a few months or so of dabbling before I decided that with some concentrated training sessions from ex-Auckland Star Linotype mechanic Brian Prideaux, I would be able to control, maintain and run this machine, and soon afterwards came an approach by a botanist friend from my university days to say, "Now you've got all the equipment you need to publish a book for me." This friend was now a fastidious librarian at the Turnbull Library in Wellington, whilst also continuing his botanical research, and he introduced me to the niceties of book design and layout. Consequently, with the publication of his *Halymenia* (the esoteric story of his quest to re-name an obscure seaweed which had been misclassified in the early 19th century) on 28 February 1980 the (now named) Pettifogging Press entered the realm of New Zealand private presses. (It is worth noting that as a result of this small publication the nomenclature of this seaweed was eventually changed.)

The Arab treadle press had now become my home press, and the little Adana stayed at school. However, as time passed I became dissatisfied with the quality of work possible on the Arab, with its clumsy roller height adjustment involving strips of card or paper inserted beneath leather straps, up and down which the rollers ran. I had learned from my reading that good inking is critically affected by correct roller height, so that the rollers do not push down too hard (or unevenly) as they run across the type, thus partially squeezing the ink off the surface of the letters even as they coat them with a thin layer. The answer to getting good printing seemed to lie in getting a better press, and with a view to providing space for this I undertook the upgrading of the old corrugated iron shed down at the bottom of the section.

Longtime builder and hi-fi friend Rob van Bremen lent me his theodolite, and taught me how to use it. I was then able to level the dirt floor of the shed and insert levelling pegs for the pouring of the concrete. I calculated the volume which would be required, and had the builders mix and cement delivered on to our driveway. It took a few days of heavy shovelling and barrowing to bring these materials down to the far end of the property, just outside the shed. Having positioned the steel mesh, with a variety of old sash window-weights thrown in, we were ready to go. Colin McKay lent me his concrete mixer, and with Dad in charge of the mixing,

my neighbour at the back, Warwick Moore and I wheelbarrowed loads of the heavy liquid into the shed to create the new floor. Dad showed me how to use a wire hook to keep pulling the mesh back to the centre of the pour, since we were trampling all over it in our gumboots as the loads of concrete were brought in. Warwick did most of the screeding to create a level surface. This pour took place in 1981 during the Springbok game at Eden Park (the one which was flour-bombed from a small aircraft), and Warwick kept disappearing through the back fence to have a squiz at his television to keep up with what was happening.

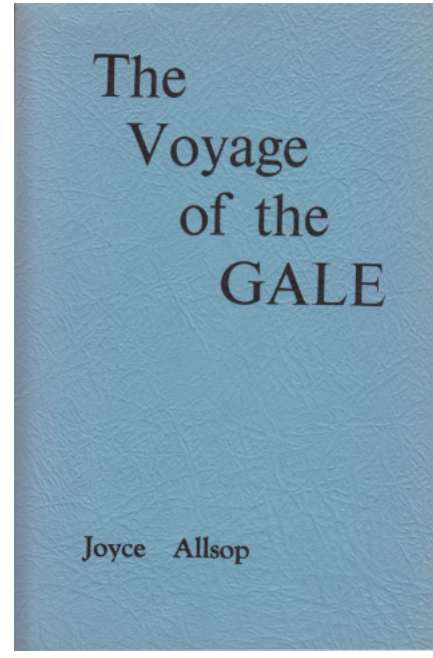
I then started asking around to try and locate the kind of machine I wanted: an "art platen" which had a parallel action where the platen slid forwards directly to the bed[4] holding the type rather than opening and shutting on a hinge (a "clamshell action") as the Arab did. This facilitated more even printing over the entire page. These presses also featured sophisticated roller height setting mechanisms, governed by a metal track which could be raised or lowered by means of a screw adjustment. Eventually through the grapevine I found one available, a Kahle made in Leipzig in the first decade of the 20th century, at Longley Printing Co Ltd in Bruce McLaren Road, Henderson; I paid a visit and met Grant Longley, who was most agreeable, and the deal was settled for $600. The Hiab driver who delivered it was extremely helpful, in that he stayed and helped Warwick, another neighbour and me shift it down the section and into place on the new concrete floor. We almost tipped it over at the last minute, but combined muscle power saved the day, and the machine was unharmed.

Kahle press in my studio
(photo taken 2012)

After fitting it with an electric motor from Linotype specialist Harry Craig, for a

few weeks I ran trials using electricity via an extension cord from Warwick's garage, which backed on to our section, but next I needed to get power put in, so contacted brother Bill's father-in-law Bill Sipinen, a retired industrial electrician. Prior to his visit I arranged to get a trench dug to lay the cable, running from the garage, across the lawn to the eastern side of the back shed. A few weeks later Bill Sip came and installed the wiring, hooked it up, and we had power! My brother and I filled in the trench, and the job was done.

My first project with the new machine was to be a small book by my wife Heather's Aunt Joyce, *The Voyage of the Gale*, telling the story of her 1935 voyage out to NZ from Glasgow on MV *Gale*, a motor vessel being brought out by her husband for service on the Chatham Island run. I had the Linotype setting all done, ready to start printing during the May holidays of 1982. Unfortunately just before printing was due to begin, through an oversight I damaged the press, so that it needed professional repair. I printed one side of the sheets on the old Arab in the garage. Miraculously, by the second week of the holidays the Kahle had been repaired and put back together by Stuart Johansson and his team at Newmarket Welding & Engineering Ltd, and I was able to finish the book using the Kahle. The difference in quality between the two presses is clearly evident when looking at the pages of this production, fully vindicating my efforts to make the investment. It cost me another $600 for these repairs.



Never satisfied, after a while I began to chafe at the restriction of being able to print only two pages at once, and visited Terry Hodge in his Newmarket lair. Terry ran a printing emporium in Kingdon Street; he travelled

much of the country visiting numerous printers who at that time (mid 1970s and right through the 1980s) were beginning to replace their letterpress gear with more up to date technology. Terry's establishment would be full of type and machinery one week, all gone by the next, so it was an exciting place to visit and shop. Terry suggested getting a cylinder press with a larger bed, able to hold up to four A5 pages of type. And that's what I did, the story being too long and involved to present here, but in due course I acquired a late-19th century Wharfedale flatbed stop-cylinder press, a spectacular machine where the bed carrying the type shuttled back and forth, the cylinder revolving to print each sheet of paper and then stopping while that sheet was delivered on to a tray at the far end of the press by flipping it up and over with a set of sticks, known as flyers.

Dad and I about to unload the Wharfedale after our early morning drive from Frankton, where we had collected the press, January 1985

A while after this adventure Dad presented to me a school exercise book half filled with a hand written manuscript, a set of stories from various stages of his life. He'd first written in pencil and then revised in ballpoint,

rubbing out the first draft and writing over it to perfect what he wanted to say. It was titled: *The Years Between*. I received this with some trepidation, not knowing how publishable it would be. But once I got it home and started reading my misgivings vanished, for he had an easy yet individual style, and a series of good tales to tell. I undertook to produce a book for him, and the Wharfedale was ideally suited for the job, being able to print four pages at once. This gave me another worthwhile project and also kept the Linotype happy, because it was thus in use many evenings of the week.

Dad provided me with a few relevant photos which I got made into halftone blocks by a little firm in West Auckland which I could detour past on my way home from Lincoln Heights School. I printed the text pages on the Wharfedale, but the photos on the Kahle, with its superior inking system. After printing was finished I was faced with a large binding job, and I investigated the cost of having the binding done for me but quickly realised that unless I did it myself, book making would be too expensive for me to continue with as a hobbyist. The only way forward was to learn about bookbinding.

At Terry's suggestion I approached Neil Boyd, a solo-operator bookbinder in Newton Gully, based in an old house. He was very supportive, allowing me to visit him repeatedly, watch him at work, and ask questions. He also was willing to sell me materials such as bookcloth and sewing thread, and gave me advice and encouragement on my finished work. I already had some hand bookbinding equipment inherited from North Shore Teachers College, which had been given to me when I began making small books with children in my classes at Jean Batten Primary School in the mid 1970s.

Dad was interested in helping too, so I showed him how to sew sections together, and sent him most of the folded and gathered sheets. I completed the binding into hard covers at my end. In typical fashion he came up with a nifty little device for piercing the holes for sewing, a vast improvement on my improvised cardboard one—I've used his gadget ever since, and made several more like it of my own to handle larger sheet sizes.

This book was published in 1985. I went on to produce another three books for Dad, two letterpress and one digital. All these were hand sewn, two hard cover and a shorter one as a single-section soft cover.

I left teaching at the end of 1987, wishing to pursue my fast-developing interest in the world of book-making. Using as inspiration the magnificent puriri tree on the berm outside our property, I established Puriri Press to replace my hobby name of Pettifogging Press, starting out at the very beginning of 1988. This name had more of a purposeful ring to it, as well as being a truly Aotearoa/New Zealand one, as I wanted my new enterprise to be taken seriously. I let friends and other contacts know that I was now in business, and the response was good, so that I didn't feel the need for more extensive advertising; many people pushed work my way, for which I was grateful.

As well as setting up a small business, I became an equal parent at home. In addition to occasional weekend work and regular evening classes, Heather had now begun picking up daytime teaching work (off campus at first) with AIT, and she had fixed hours which took her out of the home. Simon began school in February of 1988, and generally I took the children to school in the car, Heather collecting them at the end of the day. For a few years we shared transportation with near-neighbours. This continued until we both felt that the children were of an age when they could safely walk to school. For a while I met them halfway on their walk home, soon increasing the distance they walked by themselves, until after a few weeks they did it entirely without my input.

As expected, my working days were often quite short owing to home-making and childcare demands; I was preparing evening meals some days from mid afternoon; so the trickle of work coming in was about what I could manage. I think in the first year I made only about $8000, which represented a major drop in the family income.

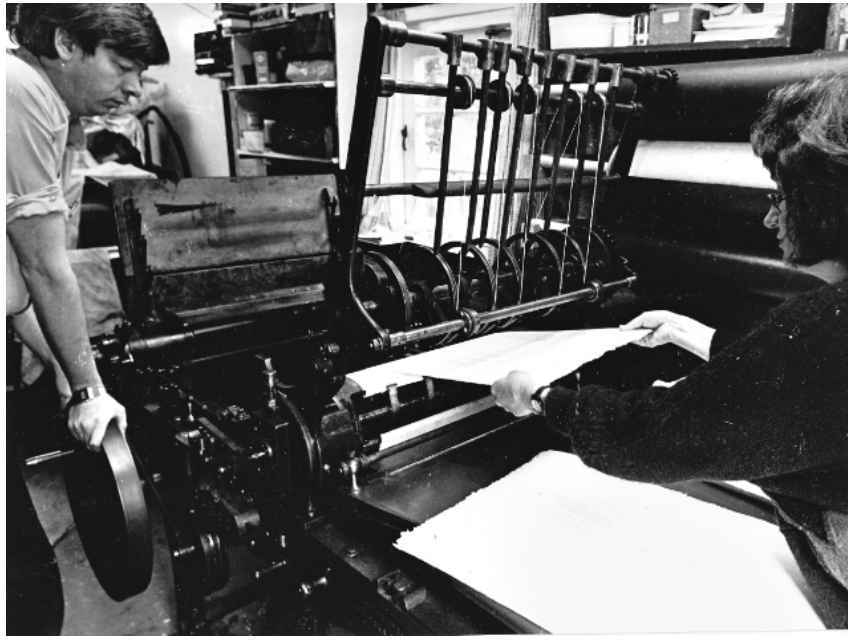
One of my first book-printing jobs when I became a business was *In Georgina's Shady Garden* by Roderick Finlayson. This was brought to me by Ron and Kay Holloway, and was being published under Ron's Griffin Press imprint. The type had been set by Rennie's a long-established typesetting and graphic media firm based in Parnell. This proved to be one of the most frustrating jobs I ever undertook, because the original setting had been done very carelessly and there was a huge number of corrections. In Linotype a correction involves the re-casting of the affected line, so that you replace the whole slug[5] rather than having to fiddle about with resetting a

line of hand type, which is a much more time consuming procedure. However, Rennie's made my task even harder by producing the corrected lines on a different machine. This had long been a no-no in the printing world. Even I knew that different machines were likely to produce slugs of slightly varying height, owing to the particular setting of the casting mould and the position of the back knife which sliced off the backsplash tang as the mould disc spun prior to the slug being ejected on to the galley beside the operator's left hand. To make matters worse the replacement slugs had been cast on an Intertype, as I could tell by looking at the back of the slug which had a different ribbing pattern to those from a Linotype. These ribs were also a special feature, in that they were trimmed by a side knife as they emerged from the machine, which had the effect of making the slug perfectly square. If the side knives were out of adjustment you could get slugs which were slightly wider at the top or "off their feet" as the trade termed it, and thus tended to arch upwards when they were locked up, causing all kinds of printing problems.

I did not know about these slightly high replacement slugs until the job got under way. Kay Holloway had arrived with the corrections, and she spent some hours in my shed, in the heat of a summer afternoon, going through the many galleys and replacing the slugs containing errors with the new ones. However, once I started printing the first four pages (I was printing 4-up, as the Wharfedale permitted), the difficulties became apparent. Everywhere Kay had inserted replacement slugs the newer lines were printing more heavily than the rest of the page.

This was a very difficult problem to counteract. The traditional method of lifting a low piece of type was to place something like a piece of tissue paper beneath the offending character, thus raising it sufficiently to receive ink and give the same impression into the paper as the rest of the type. Several lines on practically every page in the book were thus slightly high because the original setting had been so sloppy, necessitating the laborious packing of all the other lines. This meant unlocking the forme, picking out the low slugs (the majority), packing them with tissue cut to the right size and coated with vaseline to make it stick to the back of the type, reinserting the lines in the right place, and re-locking the forme. And this was different on every page of the book. It really was a nightmare of a job, and the result

was far from ideal, and not a very good advertisement for my work. Fortunately I very seldom had to work from other people's typesetting again.



John and printmaker Beth Serjeant using the Wharfedale as a hand-operated press to print her The Visionary, *1990*

As a solo operator, setting my own Linotype for book work was an enormous task. When considering what was involved you could see that the book printing industry, based as it had been for five centuries on metal typography, occupied a vast number of people. The sheer physical nature of setting and handling the many pages of heavy type (a single galley could weigh 7 or 8 kilograms), proofing it, labelling and storing it, and then putting it into pages with page numbers added, preparing it for printing on large sheets of paper with the pages arranged so that when each sheet was folded the pages would appear in the correct sequence (such a layout being known as the "imposition") was quite something. As a solo designer/operator I was doing all of this by myself. I successfully tackled quite a few entire books using this technology, though usually ones of less than 100

pages. The whole process was great fun but incredibly time-consuming.

My printing apprenticeship, so to speak, had been going on since 1975, entirely based on this 500-year-old letterpress technology, but I had for a few years now been keeping an eye on desktop computing developments through friend Ken McGrath. Ken was a confirmed Macintosh devotee, and so through his influence, and because of my chance acquaintance with Jim Hogan ("the Mac Man") based in Taupo, in January 1992 I invested about $3000 in a little Macintosh Classic computer. This was a lot of money for our family, even though we somehow qualified for the "education price" (a means whereby Macintosh was pushing its computers into schools and universities with a substantial discount) but I judged that this was the way things were headed if I were serious about staying in the printing business. Already clients were beginning to ask if they could send me their files on floppy disc rather than as typed documents, and I wanted to be able to accommodate them. The sheer ease of computer setting compared to working with metal was astonishing—and there was nothing heavy to store— hundred of pages all kept on neat little floppy discs (and later on CDs or USB sticks).

At the start of the 1992 year I used the January evenings to get to grips with the new technology; because of my experience to date I knew exactly what I wanted to be able to do, and set about getting the results I needed out of the computer. Despite its tiny screen and slowish scrolling action, I found that I could, using various work-arounds, create pages of type which pretty much matched what I had been doing in metal. The ClarisWorks software which came with the Mac did not create type as beautiful as the metal equivalent, but it was acceptable, and the ability to squeeze a little more into a line here and there with such ease meant that I could get a good-looking outcome far more rapidly than with metal. I could now confidently expect to tackle longer books, and book design and production was becoming my main focus. Next I spent another $3000 on a little HP A4 laser printer, so that I could produce master copies from my typesetting.

Whereas Linotype setting had been a huge bottleneck for the typesetting of book work, now that I could process files from floppy disc it

became a much more rapid process to transform someone's typescript into book pages. However, another typesetting bottleneck quickly manifested itself: there were still many people using traditional typewriters to prepare their manuscripts, and they would present me with sheafs of typewritten pages to work from. Once or twice I employed someone to transcribe these and key them into a computer for me, but this created delays and was quite expensive.

A solution was at hand, however, since around this time Hewlett Packard started bringing out machines which could quickly scan a typed page and convert it using OCR (optical character recognition) software into the equivalent of computer keystrokes, so that your typewritten pages could be swiftly converted into an editable file on your computer. I invested in one of these flatbed scanners, which could also be used to scan photographs and line drawings. OCR scans were not without error, depending particularly on the clarity and accuracy of the original typing, but even if there was some cleaning up of the scan to do, it took a fraction of the time compared to keying in an entire manuscript manually. Amazingly, with this tiny computer and a scanner, I could now produce lengthy books which only the commercial printing industry could have undertaken just a few years previously.

I'd heard through artist Julian Dashper (for whose shows I did quite a range of printing) about ReproGraphics, a copy centre in Takapuna which was sympathetic to working one on one with clients, so made the acquaintance of David Wong, who ran their huge high-capacity photocopying machine. He seemed amenable to producing the kind of work I wanted, and for the next seven years or so I took most of my digital printing to him. David popped my master pages into their machine and produced whatever number of copies I required. This was of course prior to the days when they could print directly from a client's digital file via email or a USB drive. I took the flat sheets home from ReproGraphics and did the folding, sewing and binding by hand. I did invest in a little folding machine at one stage, but it was extremely noisy and prone to jamming, so I sold it on and returned to hand work.

So I now ran the two technologies concurrently, letterpress where it was best suited or when a particularly fine result was needed, and digital for

longer books or works which involved a lot of graphic elements. By the year 2000, after a couple of computer upgrades and with proper typesetting software, digital represented about 80 per cent of my work, and the letterpress arm was languishing to some extent. I also bought a high-capacity, high-quality laser printer so that I could bring my entire operation back in-house.

In the year 2000 I met Ian Thwaites, and a number of quite large-scale books resulted from our association. Perhaps the most notable was the huge undertaking he made with co-author Rie Fletcher: a comprehensive account of the Auckland artists involved in what became known as the Rutland Group, titled *We Learnt to See.* This book was in an A5 format, so could be printed in sections on my laser printer (two-up on an A4 sheet), folded and sewn. However, running as it did to almost 500 pages it was a massive undertaking for a small press, and to speed up the job Ian assembled a small 'sewing group'. During the week I would print about 20 copies, which was in itself a long task for my tiny printer; the group would meet at my home on a designated day of the week by which time I would have the sections already folded with sewing holes stabbed, and the group could get to work accompanied by classical music and cheerful conversation. Rie Fletcher would bring prepared sandwiches for a simple lunch, and we would work on into the afternoon, with the team sewing as many copies

We Learnt to See,
completed Dec 2004 in an edition of 160 copies

as possible. Over the course of the following week I would glue these, rounding the backs as I went, making the cloth-covered cases and glueing the books in, thus gradually adding to the growing pile of completed items.

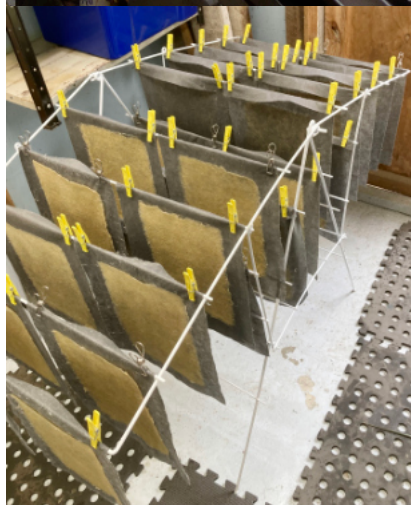
When at last the job was done, I placed the entire edition on our dining room table and was able to take a triumphant photo (see page 29) of the two writers and myself standing proudly behind the stack. Ian now jokingly refers to the project as 'We Learnt to Sew'.

In 2001 I became involved with the Epsom & Eden District Historical Society, and soon found myself (with the greatest pleasure) involved in their publications: 25 editions of their annual magazine *Prospect*, and two major books, *The History of Epsom* and *The History of Mount Eden*. At that point I had to learn my way around the world of high speed commercial book printing, a rather wonderful adventure in itself. I designed and typeset these two great books, but handed them over at pdf stage to be printed and bound by the book industry: once in New Zealand and once in Taiwan.

From around 2014 I gradually began to wind back my commercial activity, not replacing long term clients who themselves no longer had a need for printed material. From that time I also began to return to my first love: hand setting. I invested in a new range of hand type, cast for me by The Printing Museum in Lower Hutt. This late investment led to a new clutch of really nice small hand set books, printed letterpress on fine papers, over the next eight years. I was planning to keep doing this for quite a few years yet, but the floods of January 2023 put and end to it all when the studio in the back shed was inundated with waist-high contaminated water, wrecking the wooden typecases and killing every electric motor.

With all the heavy machinery and type gone, I turned instead to making paper from plant materials sourced from the local area, typically iris, flax, cabbage tree and ginger. I still design and typeset digital books on a voluntary basis, and again there has been a late flowering of some significant volumes in this genre. With the deadline pressure from business printing gone, the pure pleasure of being involved in recreational design and printing has resurfaced, and continues to bring great satisfaction.

The Littlejohn cylinder proof press, which replaced the Wharfedale in 1996, with partially printed poster on the bed of the press, 2010



Paper made from flax leaves, still on their felts, drip-drying in John's studio; they look rough in texture but this will change when the still-damp sheets are pressed, 2025

Notes:

1 platen: the flat slab (usually steel) which pushes against the type and paper to make an impression
2 forme: a page or pages of type locked up ready to be printed in a press
3 Linotype: a machine for casting complete lines of type from molten type metal
4 bed: the flat part of the press on which the forme of type sits; this can be horizontal or vertical depending on the make of press
5 slug: a line of type cast by a Linotype (or other make of linecaster)

Link to the Pearly Kings

by Judith Wallath

It's a small world. Here in Auckland Keely Stubbs, the great-grand-daughter of Henry Croft, the first 'Pearly King', works at Barfoot & Thompson in Mt Eden Village.

Who are these 'Pearly Kings'? The tradition of pearly kings and queens originated in 19th Century Victorian London. They evolved from Coster kings and queens, who were elected as leaders of London's street traders—costermongers (costard being an apple, monger being a seller).

Costers admired style and panache, and with the typical coster cheek they imitated the wealthy West End society, who by the early 19th century had developed a fashion for wearing pearls and parading in their finery on Sundays in the fashionable London parks—the Costers took it one step further by sewing lines of pearl flashers on their battered hand-me down waistcoats, caps and working trousers, and started doing their own parade—the 'Lambeth Walk'. The pearly kings and queens originated in the mid-1870s and have continued up to our present day.

Henry Croft (24 May 1861–1 January 1930), the founder of the organ-isation, was born in 1861 and raised in a rat-infested Victorian workhouse orphanage in Charles Street, Somerstown, St Pancras. At the age of thirteen he left the orphanage and became a road sweeper and rat catcher. Henry soon felt at home in his new position and became akin to the costermongers in their 'flash boy outfits' on the stalls in the markets.

The clothes these costermongers wore were decorated with a row of pearl buttons, each the size of a penny, down the outside leg seam of their trousers from the ankle to the knee; the pocket flaps on their waistcoats and the front of their caps would be decorated in a similar fashion. They were a tough, resilient and colourful breed and had a language of their own, hence the Cockney rhyming slang. They were also a caring bunch, and if a fellow coster was down on his luck they would organise a 'whip round' to help him get back on his feet.

Henry was fascinated by the costers' suits and decided to go one step further by decorating a whole suit which was top hat and tails in pearl buttons. He took their idea to a new level by using mother-of-pearl

buttons, which were mass-produced at factories in the East End. He collected buttons from various sources, such as discarded clothing, button factories, or donations from friends. He became a great attraction wherever he went, and collected pennies and halfpennies to help the orphanage where he was raised to help the children there. Henry became so popular that hospitals and other organised bodies asked him collect for the deaf, dumb and blind: Henry's lifetime of charity work had begun.

Henry was unable to manage all of this work on his own, and badly-needed help came from his friends the costermongers of the street markets of London. Croft's motivation went beyond mere spectacle. He saw the potential of his new persona to draw attention to charitable causes. He began performing at events and raising money for the less fortunate in his community. His philanthropic spirit soon spread throughout the East End, and the pearly kings and queens were born. Today, they continue Croft's mission, raising funds and awareness for various charities across London. Many of the costers became Pearly Families. There were 28 families: one for each borough of London, one for the City of London, and one for the City of Westminster. Henry became known as the Pearly King of Somers Town, and was presented to King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in 1907.

Just like back in the day, the tradition remains that each Pearly must decorate their own suit. They can be covered in tens of thousands of buttons, and will often weigh up to 30kg. They typically feature distinct patterns and symbols, just like Henry Croft's original suit. For example: a heart for charity; a dove for peace; or even playing cards to illustrate that life is a gamble, as the Pearly King of Islington once donned.

When Henry died in 1930, 400 pearly kings and queens attended his funeral in their costumes. He left behind a glittering legacy of tradition and community, and was buried in a grave marked with a statue of himself wearing his pearly suit.

This memorial statue of Henry Croft was donated by the hospitals, societies, and other charitable organisations Henry had helped in his lifetime. The statue was placed in Finchley Cemetery where Henry was buried, but sadly it was vandalised on three occasions, and lay in many pieces for six years. Today the tombstone has been replaced by a marble slab bearing a photograph of the original repaired statue, which is on show

Left: The real Henry Croft *Right: The Henry Croft statue*

in the crypt of St Martin-in-the-Fields church, Trafalgar Square, London.

Two very colourful events in the year are the Pearly Memorial service held on the third Sunday in May, and the Harvest Festival service held on the first Sunday in October. Both events are held at St Martin-in-the-Fields in Trafalgar Square, where you will see pearly kings and queens, princes and princesses, young and old. in their wonderfully decorated suits coming together dedicated to voluntary charity work and to preserve one of London's most colourful traditions.

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Armed Offenders callout to Kakariki Ave — 7 March 2006

by Jeanette Grant

This occurred in Kakariki Avenue, off Balmoral Road, just after lunch on Tuesday 7 March 2006. We heard the helicopter circling overhead from 12.30 for an hour or so, and I finally went up the drive to get the mail and see if I could see what was happening. Just as I got to the letterbox, a police vehicle with two members of the Armed Offenders Squad hanging on to it drove past. I could see other black figures up by the corner of Balmoral Road so I went home, told John and got my digital camera. A next door neighbour had just come home along Balmoral Road and said he had been forced to detour as the police had said, "there was a domestic with a firearm involved".

On returning with the camera, I saw the vehicle had been parked across the road to stop traffic going up to the Balmoral Road end. There was a group outside a house near the corner—a doghandler, three AOS men talking to a young woman—and on the grass, lying face down with a black figure in a balaclava kneeling over him, was a young man. The AOS man had a clipboard and seemed to be writing. There seemed to be very little interest from anyone in the street—most people at work or at school.

I took four photos to show the general set up and went home. I walked down my drive to Mt Eden Road to check my impression that traffic at the Mt Eden traffic lights was being diverted away from the stretch of Balmoral Road which goes past Kakariki Avenue. Greg from down Balmoral Road walked up to see what was happening and said when he came home, he

had also been detoured and that there had been a minor traffic accident which a police car ignored, saying they were already occupied with the incident in Kakariki Avenue. They had two passengers in the back seat.

My original impression was that the house involved was the first one in the street—not the one right on the corner. However when I saw the TV item that evening they were definitely going in the gate to the house actually on the corner, which uses Balmoral Road as its address although the only entry is in Kakariki Avenue. It had land agent's For Sale signs up twice last year, and I have no idea who was living there.

When I got home, I downloaded my photos, rang the *Herald* newsdesk and talked to Elizabeth Binning, who sent me an email so I could send the photos to her. Her return email said they were most impressed with them and would I give permission to use them the next day—and I should get paid if they did.

The helicopter went away, and for a few minutes we thought all the action was over. Then we heard an amplified voice, and when I went up the drive, Kakariki was deserted and the voice was coming from Balmoral Road. I climbed the ladder on to our roof and could then hear clearly that they were saying they "have a warrant to search (....) Balmoral Road. The house is surrounded by armed police. You can't get away. Come out with your hands up". Over and over again for 5–6 minutes. I emailed Elizabeth to say it was not all over yet and would possibly be worth their while sending out a photographer.

Then all went quiet. I went down to Mt Eden Road to watch the traffic, and was in time to see (2.45pm) a police car pull up alongside the one blocking the eastbound lane. After a brief conversation, they both drove away and the traffic started flowing normally. A few pedestrians who had been refused permission to walk up Balmoral Road started hurrying home. I walked after them to see which house it was. I took a photo and while I was talking to a young girl who lived next door, she suddenly said, "There's someone in there". I looked and saw someone coming out to the road from the house. We went to meet him and I took another photo. The neighbour asked, "Were you in there all the time? Didn't you hear the police?" He said he had only just arrived home and wanted to know what had happened. She described the police surrounding the house and said

that a man and a girl had come out. He did not appear to recognise their descriptions.

I left them talking and walked on into Kakariki Avenue where there were several photographers and one policewoman still talking to the young woman. I went over and said to her that the owner of the house in Balmoral Road had just arrived home if they were interested—and I went home.

Having lived here since 1944, this was the most dramatic incident I can remember occurring in the street.

The *Herald* report the next day said police were called after witnesses reported a domestic dispute. It appeared a man pointed a pistol into the face of another man following a dispute about a woman. It turned out to be an imitation firearm!

However, when Police arrived, they saw a car that was wanted in connection with a shooting in the same road (Balmoral Road) as the domestic. That led to the Armed Offenders Squad being called in to help.

Senior Sgt Clarke said, "There was no danger to the public. It was a good end to a job that could have potentially escalated into something a lot more serious."

At home in Blenkinsopp's Bunker

by David Reynolds

The former bunker in the northeast corner of the Auckland College of Education car park at 74 Epsom Ave came back into use in the mid-1960s as an operational base for Civil Defence in Auckland. Its use and the structure of Civil Defence at the time is covered in a 1967 paper by Major John Blenkinsopp (left), employed by the Auckland Regional Authority as its Civil Defence Officer. Blenkinsopp was a retired Royal Artillery officer and held the Civil Defence position until 1970.

Civil Defence recruited radio operator volunteers, largely from the amateur radio emergency corps (AREC), an existing group trained in emergency radio message handling which included several teenage boys from high school radio clubs. I was one of those.

Meetings and training took place in the bunker, where amongst the visual aids, Major Blenkinsopp had acquired a 16 mm colour film to train his volunteer staff to recognise the type of nuclear bomb air burst from its mushroom shape, albeit, naturally, from a safe distance.

The remarkable thing about the bunker when I first encountered it in about 1965, was that it appeared to have changed little since the late 1940s.

Most of the training activity was confined to the areas on the upper floor adjacent to the WWII Piha radar station's

Civil Defence demo at the Easter Show 1967. The young Mr Reynolds working on a WWII surplus ZC1 transceiver. (detail)

Auckland Council Libraries 580 14622.jpg

former Filter Room pictured below in its new role as a 1960s operations room during an Auckland Civil Defence exercise.

Blenkinsopp described the bunker in his paper as:

> Built solidly of reinforced concrete against conventional bombing during the last war, it has some 5000 square feet on two floors, 30 feet below ground level. Being redundant and empty for some 20 years, the potential of the building was quickly appreciated and developed by the Regional Authority as a Civil Defence operational and training headquarters.

Access in the 1960s was through the small door on the southwest corner, and during the time we used the bunker no other entries or exits were useable.

You entered into darkness, as the bunker's switchboard was downstairs. The first thing that assailed you was the smell of an unventilated complex lined with soft Pinex insulating board. It was clean and dry inside and quite habitable when ventilated.

The former Filter Room reborn as the Civil Defence operations room
Image from Blenkinsopp's 1967 paper.

The first job on arrival was to descend a set of stairs in complete darkness, and power up the bunker, switching on lights and a huge ventilation fan which drew air in from outside and very effectively pushed it throughout the building. The bunker also preserved a working manual telephone switchboard connecting various rooms in the complex with each other, if not to the outside world.

Aside from exercises, the only time the bunker was involved in anything close to an emergency use was during the afternoon of 10 April 1968, usually known as the Wahine Storm. During this event the roll-on roll-off inter-island passenger ferry Wahine capsized in Wellington harbour after being driven onto Barrett's Reef by former tropical Cyclone Giselle. The storm had rolled down the east coast of the North Island producing gusts of 275 km per hour in Wellington, and had apparently compromised some of Telecom's microwave communication links. Auckland Civil Defence took on the role of passing important messages between Auckland and Wellington using the Civil Defence high frequency radio links.

Then and now

How Guiding has changed since the 1920s
through the records of 13th Auckland, St Cuthbert's Guide Unit

by Cynthia Landels

As a result of the visit by the Epsom & Eden District Historical Society to St Cuthbert's College, I discovered there had been a Guide Unit there in the early days. This interested me because as archivist of Auckland Guides, I had no idea it had existed. The archivist at St Cuthbert's started hunting and found references to it in the school magazine, the *Chronicle*. These excerpts combined with other material give a picture of what Guiding was like in Auckland in the 1920s, compared to how it is now.

In 1923, the Girl Peace Scouts, a New Zealand organisation based on Lord Robert Baden Powell's Scout movement and begun by Colonel David Cossgrove of Christchurch, decided to become Girl Guides to align with England and other countries. St Andrew's Girl Peace Scouts of Epsom became 1st Auckland, Cavell Girl Guides, in August 1923. At the rally in

November of that year, there were six Guide companies taking part: Cavell, Holy Trinity (Devonport?), Takapuna, St Peter's (Onehunga?), Hobsonville and St Mary's (Parnell).

By April 1924, when St Cuthbert's Company was formed as 13th Auckland, there had been phenomenal growth in the number of companies, from 6 to 13 in just a few months.

When St Cuthbert's Guide Company began it had only a few (but very enthusiastic) members, but by the beginning of the second term 30 girls belonged. They were working on the first Guide badge, that of Tenderfoot, and all except two passed. Those that did not pass was because of the fact they had missed two meetings. The Guides were enrolled by Mrs Wilson, the Auckland Provincial Commissioner. Unit Leaders now enrol new Guides, not usually Coordinators.

Guide Parade 1924: St Cuthbert's Guides being enrolled by Mrs Wilson

In the early days of Guiding all knowledge was tested, and the Guide had to pass. Nowadays the emphasis is on participation.

The officers were Miss Johnston, Miss Dodds and Miss Smeaton, all three of them unmarried women, as was common in those days. Of course, now those leading Guide Units are called leaders, which is not nearly so official and much more friendly, and are often called by their Christian name.

A Guide Unit works in Patrols, which are groups of about six with an elected girl leader. This has not changed in over 100 years. The four St Cuthbert's patrols were named Robin, Marguerite, Oak and Kingfisher. Two Lone Guides from Whangarei were attached to the Oak and Kingfisher patrols, and the St Cuthbert's Guides wrote to them weekly to help them. There are still Lone Guides today.

For the rest of the year the St Cuthbert's Company worked on the Second Class badge which included learning the Morse code and being able to signal it with a flag. No Morse code now, except for using it for fun in games and activities. St Cuthbert's were also working on the Gymnasium badge. And the Kingfisher Patrol was making a garden.

By 1925, there were eleven Guides in one form. It is not recorded how many were in other forms. Josephine Tolhurst was the first to complete Second Class, and two had gained the Service badge.

By now the leaders had changed, and Miss Webster was Captain. The company had moved to a larger hall, where each patrol had a corner which they could decorate with knot charts and so on. Guides still learn to tie knots today. Guiding was competitive, with marks given weekly. The winning patrol had the privilege of carrying the Colours (flag) on ceremonial occasions. Currently the emphasis in Guiding is on cooperation, rather than competition.

The company had a busy year. They attended a rally with the other Guides of the Auckland Province, which was held in the Town Hall to farewell Lord Jellicoe, the retiring Governor General. They attended the annual Auckland Provincial church parade at St Matthew's-in-the-City Church. St Cuthbert's in August took part in the Auckland Guide basketball tournament but was beaten in the final by Cavell. (See *Prospect*, Volume 21, 2022, page 19 for more about Cavell.) No special dress, just roll up your uniform sleeves.

At this time the leaders of the other Guide companies, St Marks, St Heliers, Takapuna and Cavell met together every six weeks to assist each other with the sharing of ideas. Guide leaders still do this today. On another occasion the leaders visited Mrs W. R.Wilson's home in Takapuna. This was to welcome Lady Alice Fergusson, who as the wife of Sir Charles Fergusson, the new Governor General, was the Patron of Girl Guides in

The winning Cavell basketball team

New Zealand. This tradition has continued to this day. The Patron or President of Guiding New Zealand is either the wife of the Governor General, or if the Governor General is a woman, she has the appointment.

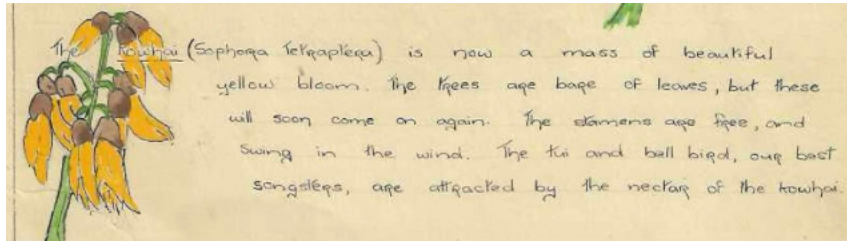
Mrs W. R. Wilson (Lucinda), Auckland Provincial Commisioner and from 1926 New Zealand Chief Commissioner

Mrs Lucinda Wilson was the Auckland Provincial Commissioner at this time. Commissioners are now called Coordinators. Auckland Province at this time extended from North Cape as far south as Te Kuiti. Now the Auckland Guide region only extends from the Harbour Bridge to the Manukau Harbour.

During 1925, St Cuthbert's Guides held four enrolment ceremonies to which parents were invited. An enrolment ceremony is still held today when a Guide makes her

Guide Promise. The Guides took part in two rambles, one to Waikowhai and the other to Orakei, on which they studied nature and did tracking, two activities Guides still do today. By the end of the year most had finished their Second Class. Second Class was discontinued in 1970, and since then the programme has been revised several times with different badges for Guides to gain, but always with a sense of progression as in the 1920s.

They were also working on nature logbooks. Here is a sample of one of Cavell's logbooks. The Guides spent a great deal of time researching trees and plants and hand painting them. Guides do not do anything like this now.



Cavell logbook entry

St Cuthbert's Company had their flag dedicated on 1 November 1925. There is no record of what the flag was, but it was most probably the Union Jack as all Guide Companies had them right up until the 1970s. Some companies still have flags, but now it is either the New Zealand ensign or the Guide World Flag.

There was a rally held on 7 November 1925 in honour of Lady Margery Dalrymple. She was a prominent leader in England, holding a Blue Cord Diploma (a high award) and was in New Zealand for two years assisting Mrs Wilson in spreading Guiding. This rally was attended by 400 to 500 Guides and Brownies, had displays of fancy marching, signalling, ambulance work, a fire drill display, poi dancing and country dancing. The officers, which included the new Auckland Provincial Commissioner Dr Margaret Knight, were welcomed in 'true Māori fashion' by the Guides of Wikitoria (Queen Victoria College) Company.

There are no records for St Cuthbert's in 1926, but they must have been doing very well as they won the Kohn Cup. It had been presented at the Rally in November 1925 for the first time. Given to the Guides of Auckland by A. Kohn, a Queen Street jeweller, it was for excellence in company work, and the inaugural winner was Cavell.

The Kohn Cup

The St Cuthbert's Company held a camp at Christmas, 1925–26 but it does not say where. Cavell Company was camping at this time and camped at Whangateau. Guides continue the tradition of camping up to the present day. The big difference is in the type of tents used. In the 1920s Guides were using bell tents. Dome tents, square tents and everything in between are used by Guides now.

Guides pitching a bell tent, Whangateau, 1924

In 1927 the St Cuthbert's Guides camped for ten days at Henderson. In charge were the Captain (now called the Unit Team Leader), two Lieutenants (now Assistant Leaders) and a camp mother who looked after the hospital tent. Nowadays there is no hospital tent! During the camp they went on two bush walks and had a fancy dress party, with the costumes no doubt improvised from what they could find. They had some wet days during which they wrote a chronicle, which was later typed and put in the company logbook, long since lost. Sounds just like a modern camp!

During this year too many girls wanted to join, so those over 16 years of age became Cadets and were enrolled by Dr Margaret Knight, who was also the Dominion head of Rangers. She had become the Auckland Provincial Commissioner after Mrs Wilson became the New Zealand Chief Commissioner in 1926. Cadets were a group training to become leaders. Now they are called Rangers in Leadership. Miss Mona Burgin, who was the Captain of Cavell Guides, came and told the Cadets about Brownies. (See *Prospect*, Volume 16, 2020, page 16 for more about Mona Burgin.)

The company held a meeting of the Court of Honour (a committee to run the unit consisting of the Leaders and Patrol Leaders) and decided to run the company differently. There would be a special theme for each Wednesday of the month. The Kingfisher Patrol visited Knox Home one afternoon. Guides still visit retirement homes, in fact Epsom Guides sang carols at Knox for many years. Mrs Tolhurst gave a party and they all went, what fun!

There was a Guide Rally on 19 November 1927 in the Auckland Domain to welcome home Mrs Wilson, who had been to England for a conference. This rally was advertised in the newspaper for the general public to attend, and over 4000 did so. Guiding would not advertise and invite the general public to an event now.

The 1000 Guides and 500 Brownies presented the usual displays of first aid, tent erection, archery, fitness and country dancing. The rallies featured Robin Hood, Greek maidens, and knights in armour, so it was no wonder the public turned up to watch. The most spectacular thing at this one was all the Guides making a living map to show how far Guiding had spread around the world. These annual rallies must have been quite amazing. The Guides would have put in months of practice, especially marching for the

march past the officers on the dais. Guides do not march any more . . . it's more like an amble.

Guides at a rally, 1927 (a newspaper photo)

The last big Auckland rally was held in Eden Park in 1967 in honour of Lady Baden-Powell, the World Chief Guide. Guides came by train from all over the North Island and filled one of the stands. A similar rally was held in the South Island.

St Cuthbert's held a camp at the beginning of 1928. In 1928 the company held a bazaar on 1 July in St George's Hall to raise funds and made £80, a large amount for the times. In the Christmas holidays a camp was held at Clevedon. By now, there were so many Guides another company was formed. At half term a camp was held at Otimai, the Guide house up at Oratia. Although wet, the Guides enjoyed the bush, sliding down hills in their gumboots.

Form Two Interhouse cup presented in 1929

In 1929, the Form Two Interhouse cup for public spirit was presented to the school by the Guides. As was the custom at that time they inscribed on the cup that the company had won the Kohn Cup.

There was no further mention of the

Guides in St Cuthbert's records until 1940–1941, when a Ranger Company of Guides aged over 15 was formed. Miss Martin from the UK was the leader. In July five were enrolled. They enjoyed a weekend camp at Otimai.

In 1943 they attended the annual Auckland Church Parade, marching up Queen Street to the Town Hall. This annual march up Queen Street to the Town Hall continued until the late 1990s, when the Town Hall became too expensive for the Guides to hire.

St Cuthbert's took part in the swimming sports, coming second in the inter-company relay, One Guide gained the Second Class badge. Miss Martin was Captain until she returned to UK, and Miss Burgin from Cavell Guides then helped run the Company.

By 1944 St Cuthbert's was a smaller company, meeting on Saturday afternoons, and was mostly made up of boarders. The Captain now was Miss Heather Dunlop, a St Cuthbert's old girl. They were busy practising drill for the Guide Rally in October to celebrate 21 years of Guiding in New Zealand.

There are no further records of St Cuthbert's Company. Unfortunately, this has been the fate of many Guide Companies over the years, as they are totally dependent on someone being prepared to be the adult leader. It is also the case today, since units often close due to lack of leaders. Nothing changes! But each time this happens, it means girls miss out on the fun and friendship, the adventure and leadership that Guiding offers.

My grateful thanks are extended to Sarah Padey, archivist, St Cuthbert's College, for her excellent help in researching material for this article.

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Chronicles for 1924, p. 10; 1924 p. 30; 1924 pp. 37–38; 1925 pp.36–37; 1927 pp. 41–42; 1928 pp.36–37; 1929 p.95; 1940–41 p.25; 1942–44 p.34.
Auckland Region Archives—photo of the Kohn Cup.
1st Auckland, Cavell Guide Unit Archives—photos of 1924 basketball team, Mrs Wilson, pitching a bell tent, extract from a nature log book.

Speaking out

by Jeanette Grant

I was a pupil at Epsom Girls' Grammar School from 1953-57, and have many happy memories of that time.

Things have changed a lot since then. The school had opened in 1917 to take the overflow from Auckland Girls' Grammar School and many classes were initially held in tents. A wooden building which contained the hall, library and about a dozen classrooms was still the main part of the school until its final demolition about 1964.

That hall has left vivid impressions in my memory. Every school day began at 9am with an assembly. Each class left their homeroom and walked in single file into the hall with the shortest members of the class in front by the stage as every class stood along the length of the hall. There were four rooms opening off the northern side of the hall. Those classes stayed in their rooms and were each joined by another class (of 36 girls), who perched on the tops of their desks. There was a hallway at right-angles to the stage on the south side where another four classes stood in line.

The assembly began with the staff filing onto the stage and the headmistress (Miss Adams in those days) taking the lectern. We sang a hymn from the school hymn book, had a Bible reading by a senior pupil, and the Lord's Prayer was recited in unison. Then everyone sat down on the floor—if you could find room. On many mornings there were two or three girls forced to stand conspicuously in the middle of their fellows while we listened to the notices for the day.

However, the hall was also important to us as the venue for our acting. 'Speech' was an actual subject taken by everyone in the school. Once a week, each class had a session with Miss Gauden who taught us how to recite, how to act and—most important in those days before microphones were readily available—how to throw our voices to be heard in the appalling acoustics of the old hall.

Why was this important? Well, every class had to put on a play each year. In our 5th form year, it was a scene from Shakespeare in Term 1. Obviously this was at the start of the year so as not to interfere with the build up to School Certificate exams in the last term. At fourth form level

each class chose a scene from Shaw in term two, and third formers had more choice in term three. (NB: There were only three school terms then, not four.) These scenes were not only performed for our schoolmates, but in evening sessions attended by our parents. It was a big deal. Everyone in the class was involved—not just the actual actors. You might be busy making scenery or costumes, acting as a prompt or learning your lines, as every actor needed an understudy ready to take over in case of their absence.

In those days before TV, hands-on acting was important to us, out of school as well. I had four friends—Helen, Merlyn, Mary & Beverley—who had all been in Girls' Brigade together and sang in the choir at the Mt Eden Methodist Church. In those days, there was an annual Methodist Choir & Drama Festival. We used to meet in the church hall in Ngauruhoe Street after school and have a lot of fun rehearsing all on our own. One year Beverley wrote a play about John Wesley, and her sister made us all appropriate costumes. We put it on in the Pitt St Methodist Church Hall, and had to repeat it in the Town Hall Concert Chamber. That was notorious for its bad acoustics so we were very proud that we were able to make ourselves heard clearly there.

The five friends in costume, 1954

A year or two later, there was a Methodist anniversary festival held in the Town Hall, and I was asked to be the female commentator introducing the various acts. At the time I just took it for granted but looking back it was probably a bigger deal than I realised.

Auckland's earliest coroner's inquests

Compiled by Jeanette Grant

This is a fascinating list of the causes of death given in the 48 earliest Auckland Coroner's Inquest Reports—as found by Laurie Gluckman.

Note that eleven of the 34 adult and seven of the 13 children were drowned.

Other common causes were the seven who were drunk, the four who were suicides and 13 are just listed as an "Act or visitation of God". In other words the medical expertise available was unable to determine the cause.

1	adult male	sailing; drowned
2	12 months	killed by mother's drunk partner
3	adult male	sailing; drowned
4	3yrs	burns
5	child	drowned in pit
6	adult male	Act of God
7	adult female	suicide - poison
8	adult male	hit by falling branch
9	adult male	Act of God
10	adult male	fell from mast while drunk
11	adult male	Act of God
12	adult male	effects of intoxication
13	adult male	sailing; drunk; drowned
14	adult male	act of God - in gaol
15	child	drowned in well
16	adult male	drowned drunk
17	adult male	drowned in Manukau
18	child	drowned in well
19	adult male	sailing; drowned

20	child	Act of God
21	adult male	Act of God
22	3yrs	drowned in hole
23	adult male	Act of God; in gaol
24	adult male	fell down cliff drunk
25	adult male	sailing; drowned
26	adult female	drunk; drowned in bucket of water
27	adult male	seizure; vomiting of blood
28	adult male	suicide; cut own throat
29	child	drowned in well
30	adult male	suicide; cut own throat
31	child	overlain
32	adult male	sailing; drowned
33	adult male	Act of God
34	adult female	Act of God
35	infant	found decayed; cause unknown
36	adult male	suicide; hanging
37	adult male	congestion of the brain caused by excessive drinking
38	adult male	Act of God
39	child	drowned in a tan pit
40	adult male	accidental discharge of a gun
41	adult male	No verdict; had inflammation of the peritoneum
42	child	run over by a horse & cart
43	adult male	visitation of God [ill for months before]
44	adult male	boat capsized; drowned
45	adult male	visitation of God [ill for weeks before]
46	4yrs	drowned in well
47	adult male	sailing; drowned