

## President’s Report

*Just when you thought you knew the early history of Cambridge* archaeologists have validated earlier settlement than previously considered. They have found evidence of extensive horticulture occurring approximately 500 years ago.

Local archaeologist **Warren Gumbley** and his team investigating pre-construction of the housing development on the river side of Addison Street have found evidence of extensive food crops planted there 500 years ago. Further away from the river, in the Swayne Road area, they confirmed huge areas of land specially developed for kumara production from a later era.

In the area of the Lamb Street and Roto o Rangi Road housing development, evidence of a rare Whare marama (moon house) has been found.

Our Society is excited about the finds as it puts Cambridge squarely on the map as having some of the earliest settlers in the Waikato. We are hoping to work with local Mana Whenua and Warren’s team to tell those stories.

### Seismic risk to Cambridge museum

We have been advised by Council, who have been assessing District buildings, that the current museum building is earthquake prone and will require strengthening over the next few years. Meanwhile, to reduce the risk to staff and public entering and leaving the building, Council proposes to lower the chimneys to roof height and erect a scaffold or similar structure to strengthen the front of the building. Timings for these works have still to be confirmed.

### Early notice – Cambridge Historical Society AGM

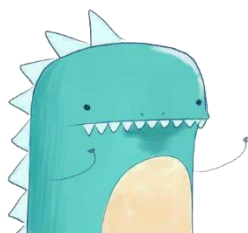
Please pencil in the date of our Cambridge Historical Society Annual General Meeting to be held on Tuesday 26 November 2019 - venue and agenda details yet to be confirmed. We hope to see you all there!

**Grant Middlemiss**

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## Museum Manager’s Report

It has been a long process, but we have completed the majority of the inventory for objects held in the lockup, and are now working through the shelves in the Collection Store. Three bays of mobile shelving have now been transferred into our Container store, and most of the textile collection is in place there.



*If you want something quirky to do over the October school holidays, come in and Hunt for Dinosaur Footprints amongst our displays. Answer the questions and go into the draw for a family pass to Cambridge Mini Golf!*

Kim Smythe of **Alpino Restaurant** donated to the museum a wonderful rimu display case that now has pride of place in our military room – and provides much needed additional exhibition space. A huge thank you to Kim for this generous gesture.

Those of you interested in our 3<sup>rd</sup> Waikato Militia – and indeed any other New Zealand Militia – will enjoy our new purchase *New Zealand dress regulations 1852-1909 Militia, Volunteer, Constabulary, & Permanent Forces* by Barry O’Sullivan for our research collection. You are welcome to come in any time to make use of our reference library in Reception.

**Kathryn Parsons**

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## Woodn’t it be Nice - winner



Warm congratulations to **Alistair Coutts** from Leamington, who won a family pass to the movies in Cambridge. We received 47 entries from children throughout the district, who had to match wood carvings to items of furniture in the museum.

Alistair answered all the questions correctly, and now he and his family are off enjoy a family movie together.



## Cambridge Peace Celebrations

*Despite everyone's best intentions, it didn't all run smoothly for the Cambridge Peace Celebrations on Saturday 19 and Monday 21 July 1919. Here are some of the great ideas, debates, altercations, successes and inevitable failures, covered by the Waikato Independent in the lead-up and aftermath of the celebrations.*

### Preparations

It didn't augur well from the outset. The celebrations were originally planned for 14 November 1918 but as the main body of men came home from the war, an influenza epidemic swept the country. Cambridge wasn't immune, and all public events had to be postponed until the crisis was over.

Although all arrangements had been made to continue the Peace celebrations to-day, word was received from the Public Health Department prohibiting all further gatherings of the public in view of the serious nature of the influenza epidemic in other centres. No other alternative was therefore possible to the Executive and committees which had the control of the day's events, but to postpone indefinitely the procession, sports and concert which were to have been held to-day.

Just as well, as a bone of contention had already surfaced with the returning servicemen, judging by the resentful tone of this Letter to the Editor on 9 November 1918: "Sir, - Re Peace Celebrations at Cambridge. Seeing that the Returned Soldiers are totally ignored with regard to above I would like to suggest through the columns of your paper that all Returned men in the district would at once hold a meeting and make arrangements to participate in the Peace Celebrations at Hamilton. - I am, etc., "ONE WHO HAS DONE HIS BIT," 24013, Te Miro."

I don't know why the letter was written, but noticed that among the various committees that had been appointed to organise the event (Executive; Finance; Decorations; Bonfire and Fireworks; Archway; Band; Schoolchildren; Maori; Transport; and Sanatorium Boys), there was no "Returned Servicemen" committee.

Months passed, and at last a telegram arrived from the Hon. G W Russell, outlining subsidies and the new dates of 19 and 21 July for the celebrations – Monday 21 July being declared a Public Holiday.

On 10 July 1919, a meeting to formulate the programme was held at the Council Chambers, Mayor Wilkinson presiding. Disagreement arose over whether the event should be of one or two days' duration, the ladies protesting that they couldn't stand the strain of catering for two days with a Sunday in between, and the Committee split on the subject. Finally, the Committee voted for a single day's celebration.

This was the last straw for one member of the Decorations Committee who resigned at once, believing it was useless to decorate the town for one day only. Before the meeting concluded, members were reminded that the Monday was to be a Public Holiday. The Committee then agreed to a two day celebration but, as a point of order, was unable to rescind its original decision until the next meeting.

A bigger issue was to arise, which was to cast its shadow over the preparations and beyond. The Executive Committee had agreed to allow ale for the soldiers at a luncheon in the Town Hall, served by the Women's Patriotic League, but some of the women

objected to alcohol. These women consulted their Church ministers on the subject, who were surprised that a committee of four men (including Mayor Wilkinson) had made this decision without consulting the women first. The ministers suggested that, bearing in mind everything the League had done for servicemen overseas, the servicemen themselves should decide whether it was appropriate for ale to be served. The servicemen had no choice but to forgo the ale, but expressed appreciation for the Executive Committee's original decision.

When at least one Church minister delivered a sermon criticising the Executive Committee, the newspaper leapt to the Committee's defence and published a stinging article, accusing the ministers of "inhumanity" and "intolerance". The Cambridge Ministers' Association replied in kind, and so it went on.

### Saturday's celebrations

On a cold and foggy morning, large crowds gathered in Victoria Street and at the fountain at the corner of Duke Street (pictured). Mayor Wilkinson mounted the balcony of the Central Hotel and read the King's Proclamation, three cheers were given and the National Anthem was sung. Leamington School children then sang the "Marseillaise".

At 10.30am, headed by the Brass Band, the procession moved off in the direction of the High Level Bridge, turning into the lower part of Duke Street, marching along into Victoria Street again and up to Victoria Square.

Once the procession was over, the fun began with children's sports, bran tubs (lucky dips), lolly scrambles, cake, sandwiches and tea.

All activity ceased at 12 o'clock for a silent tribute to the men "gone west", after which a member of the Brass Band played the Last Post.



Thankfully, the luncheon in the Town Hall for the returned soldiers and veterans of past wars, served by the Women's Patriotic League, passed off without a hitch.

The afternoon's events continued with children's sports and races between various schools competing for a banner. These were so successful, that these inter-school competitions were continued on an annual basis. Maori provided "considerable entertainment by displays of their old-time hakas and dances."





In the evening was a fireworks display. It started well, but something went wrong with the grand finale. The concluding feature of the night was a bonfire which, despite taking a long time to start, ultimately "burnt up brilliantly".

**Monday's celebrations**

Monday was described as a "tame" day by comparison to Saturday's events. A fancy dress football match scheduled for the morning didn't take place, so the proceedings didn't begin until after lunch, when a crowd gathered to watch motorcycle contests up and down the Duke Street hill.

A representative football match between the A and B teams of the Cambridge Rugby Union, held in Victoria Square at 3pm, was described as "very one-sided", but everyone enjoyed the Maori poi dances and haka at half time.

In the evening, a Peace Concert was held in the Town Hall (price 2s). Singers and comedians made up the programme. The hall was packed to the doors and everyone agreed that it was one of the best yet held in Cambridge.

**After the celebrations**

The Cambridge Brass Band was especially commended for providing outstanding service throughout the celebrations.

A Letter to the Editor was sent by the RSA, who were incensed at the backlash by the Church ministers against the Executive Committee. They called the ministers "petty and narrow and not in keeping with the broad-minded attitude adopted towards ourselves in other countries ... Further, this gathering records its heartfelt appreciation of the attitude of the executive of the celebrations committee, and feel that this attitude was an honest and sincere endeavour to treat us broad-mindedly and as men."

Mayor Wilkinson of the Executive Committee also wrote to the paper, stating that the Committee had no legal right to set up a prohibitory law for a section of the community, and applauded the decision of the servicemen to forgo the ale, saving "an awkward situation".

An issue arose against the use of nikau palm leaves in the celebrations, with a concern expressed that the trees may not survive the constant forays by citizens in times of celebration. These leaves can be seen in photographs showing the Post Office clock tower in Cambridge, which was festooned with them.

Finally, the newspaper reported: *The cold, raw weather was a feature of the proceedings over which those arranging the celebrations had no control, and there was no doubt that had the same proceedings taken place on a warm summer's day there would have been more of the public taking an active part.*

However, "for a little town we have not done badly, and that though sometimes the organisation was a little faulty, yet, on the whole, there is very little cause for complaint."

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Was it appropriate for Mayor E J Wilkinson to benefit financially from the sale of paraphernalia for the Peace Celebrations that his Executive Committee was organising?



## New Members

A big welcome to new members of the Cambridge Historical Society:

**Ken and Dorothy Gaunt**  
**Heather Wellington**  
**Ross Johnson**  
**Sharon Fulton Bevers**  
**Tom Pickering**

## Cambridge cards for sale



If you're looking to send letters, cards or postcards, please consider popping in to see our selection of cards with a Cambridge theme. They include cards with prints of oil paintings from Richard Horner (\$4 each

shown here), sepia postcards of historic Cambridge (50c each), cards with an ink drawing of the old Duke of Cambridge Lodge by David McCarthy (\$1 each), and various colour postcards (\$1 each).

## "SLACKS" IN CAMBRIDGE

Shoppers in Victoria Street on Tuesday afternoon experienced a mild shock. It is not often girls in 'slacks' are seen in the streets, but here were two of them, tall and unconcerned – one wearing a bright red pair with an equally vivid green jacket, the other more sombrely clad in blue from head to foot.

Perhaps they were visitors to the town, but in any case it is hard to imagine the fashion spreading to any extent. Cambridge maids and matrons are likely to remain faithful to skirts for many moons to come, although it is whispered that two local lasses were seen at the pictures the other night, one in white and the other in grey slacks; still that is not in broad daylight.

During the holidays it was not an uncommon sight to see two dainty little maids of school age about the streets in shorts – one affected a bright red pair – but while little Miss Thirteen can do such things and get away with them, Miss Almost-out-of-her teens cannot afford to be quite so daring.

*Waikato Independent 8 February 1934*

## Walks and Talks

### Archaeological Field Trip

Saturday 28 September 2019, at 9.50 am

#### *500 years of Cambridge settlement*



Hear **Poto Davies** from Ngati Koroki Kahukura describe the Whare Marama (birthing unit) located on site on Whare Marama Drive.

#### Directions:

*From low level bridge travel to the end of Shakespeare Street;  
Turn left into Lamb St;  
Then right into Roto o Rangi Road;  
2nd left into Seachange Drive;  
Then 3rd left into Whare Marama Drive;  
Meeting area halfway along Whare Marama Drive on the right.*



For more information, phone Grant Middlemiss, President, 021 360 840.

## NZ HISTORY FEDERATION REGIONAL MEETING

**Raglan Old School Arts Centre**  
**5 Stewart Street**

**5 October 2019 at 10am to 3.30pm**

**Cost \$20 (to pay by Monday 30 September 2019) to**  
**Raglan & District Museum Society Inc,**  
**Westpac 03 1563 0028458 00**  
**Use reference NZHF, and your name**

**RSVP to [info@raglanmuseum.co.nz](mailto:info@raglanmuseum.co.nz)**

*Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea provided*

**All members welcome.**

