

Buckingham Bee

“So, we managed to get a Regional Heritage Grant to purchase plastic sleeves to protect our Reg Buckingham negative collection.”

“That’s great news!”

“Yes. Only problem is we can’t claim it until all the sleeves have been filled with the negatives. We’re being paid in four instalments and we’ve only managed to fill enough sleeves to claim the first one.”

“So what are you going to do?”

“Well, we decided to hold working bees to see if our members could donate a couple of hours to fill sleeves with negatives.”

“And how did that go?”

“Brilliantly. Eight people turned up for the first one – to enjoy sparkling conversation and the chance to see some of what Buckingham captured on film in the 1980s. Together, we managed to fill 100 sleeves! We’re now on track to claim the second instalment.”

“So what’s next?”

“We have two more instalments to claim and each requires 500 sleeves to be filled, so we’ll let you know when we’ll be holding more working bees over the course of this year. We hope to see as many people as possible come along to help us preserve their local history.”



Many thanks to (clockwise from back left) Marcia Baildon, Grant Middlemiss, Gill Milton, Jo Barnes, Heather Wellington, Bronwen Byers and Dave Payne. Image by photographer Michael Jeans who spoke about his experiences of capturing Cambridge subjects on film.

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Tēnā koe from the President



New season, new normal and a new Manager. Exciting times and an opportunity to reflect on our purpose and strategic goals moving forward. As a Society and Museum emerging in a post-pandemic world, it is clearer than ever that we must reach out and engage more widely with our community.

Our new strategic plan recognises the progress in recent years to strengthen our Collection and to apply the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Now we’re ready to build upon these experiences, try new things and share more local histories. Of course, there will be challenges ahead. Space for exhibitions and collection storage continues to be a major issue. With your help, we can begin to think creatively about how we can overcome these.

We are also looking at ways to increase the value we offer you as Members and Friends of the Historical Society, so watch this space.

Yours, Grant

From Elizabeth

Kia ora koutou



I would like to extend a warm kia ora from me as I step into the role of Manager at Cambridge Museum and to thank my colleague Karen who has once again created a fascinating newsletter.

Don’t miss part 2 of Souter’s *The First Cars of Cambridge* which offers significant insights into life in Cambridge during the 20th century, and enjoy a snapshot of our first photography working bee with Reg Buckingham’s Collection. It was such fun we’re doing it again on 3 and 6 May. Numbers are limited so please get in touch if you’d like to join in (contact details below).

We’re going DigitalNZ

In March, we took a step closer to making our Collection accessible online by partnering with Digital NZ, an initiative managed by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. It is now possible to search for our objects, photographs, and archives on <https://digitalnz.org/>. There are 93 objects online so far, a small amount compared to the 12,500+ objects in our care. More items will be added every month. Partnering with DigitalNZ means we are working with a team that shares our passion for reaching out to people on a quest for knowledge and inspiration. Plus they have a proven track record of engaging successfully with researchers, teachers and students. We’re looking forward to the opportunities this will give us to share our Collection and stories online.

New Anzac-inspired display for April

This month we have a new display in the Museum and on our website to commemorate Anzac Day. Titled *Postcards from the Great War: WWI Silk Embroidered Postcards from the Trenches*, it looks at the Armer family of Leamington’s experiences of WWI told through postcards sent to them by their sons in France. Within the Museum, we also included a place for visitors to add poppies to commemorate their own family members who have served or who are serving in the Armed Forces. Well worth a visit.



The First Cars of Cambridge – Part 2

The following is an abridged transcript of a talk given to the Cambridge Historical Society by Neville Souter, aged 70, in September 1969. His grandfather, Captain William Burns Souter founded the firm of W Souter & Co in the early 1860s passing the business on to his sons Edwin (Neville's father) and Joseph in 1888. The first part of Mr Souter's speech was published in our March 2022 issue.



Neville Souter (pictured in the Waikato Independent 18/9/1969) attended the Cambridge District High School and took over the business shortly after his father's death in 1924. Already the firm had transferred from seed, grain, farm implements and real estate to the motor business. Mr Souter died in 1976 aged 77.

"One of the biggest bugbears of early motoring was the condition of the roads. Even in our town old residents will remember that every winter there was a foot of mud in Duke Street. To allow foot traffic to cross the road there was a set of duck boards laid where the present pedestrian crossing is situated, and a further set opposite the Dalgety Loan Co.

However, these conditions were finally overcome through the enterprise of Mr Fred Bunyard, the Borough Engineer. He persuaded the Council to let him treat the road with tar and sand. The tar, being a product of the local gasworks, was in plentiful supply. This procedure was repeated each year. When years afterwards the road was torn up for permanent surfacing, the skin of tar and sand was two inches thick. This method of sealing was extended with success to other streets in the Borough and finally to the entire Cambridge-Hamilton Road. For a long time this was the only dust free section between here and Auckland.

Talking of civic affairs, in the early part of the century the Borough Council offices were located on an area now occupied by the swimming baths [now Robert Harris café] with the Borough Depot alongside on property now owned by Cambridge Transport Ltd [now The Warehouse]. A little further south was the Convent School. On the opposite side of the road, in the Commerce Street area, was the Cambridge Saleyards with further saleyards operated by Hunter & Nolan on a site where now stands the Town Hall.

But to get on with the bad roads story. During the winters Cambridge was well isolated by impassable roads. Tauranga, Morrinsville, Rotorua, Te Kuiti and sometimes even Tirau could not be reached during the winter months when the rainfall was abnormal, while the road to Auckland was impassable nearly every winter due to the condition of the clay hills at Rangiriri.

In addition the early motorist was up against it when abnormal rainfall resulted in sections of the roads being underwater. One notorious area was behind the Mercer Railway Station where the road was regularly flooded. Private enterprise being what it is, a man and a horse were usually on duty, the price of a tow through being 10/- if you hooked on before entering the deep section but if you made the attempt and got stuck halfway the price went up to 20/-. I always had a go and always paid the full price. To cope with these conditions, my father carried a wire strainer in the tool box – also a spade, axe, wire cutters and a collapsible canvas bucket as in heavy slogging, radiators required frequent topping up. When a road was really bad the local authority sometimes endeavoured to make it passable by laying fascines crosswise over the extra bad patches.

Round about 1914, various accessories began to come on the market. These included speedometers, and tailor-made chain sets to fit snugly over the tyres. Hitherto we had to improvise with ropes or short lengths of chain threaded through the spokes. There were various kinds of warning signals as a supplement to the bulb horn. Among these were whistles, bells, klaxons, exhaust whistles and even mouth operated sirens. Most cars, except the Model T, were fitted with exhaust cut-outs operated by a pedal in the floor. The use of this was a sure way of letting traffic know of your desire to pass but somewhat tough on fractious horses. Rear vision mirrors also began to appear, but windscreen wipers only came on the scene about 1925, the first being hand operated.

There were always plenty of quack methods of increasing miles per gallon. One of the best known were Gastine tablets which smelled something like mothballs and were put into the fuel tank. They had no beneficial effect whatever but commanded a ready sale.

Most radiators leaked and a quick answer was Radiator Cement of which there were many brands on the market. A puncture sealing compound called Korger was introduced into the tube through the valve. It looked something like porridge and was quite efficient while it remained moist but quite useless when it dried out. Graphite as an additive was and is still used, but it was fatal to the Model T Ford as it short-circuited the flywheel magneto which runs in the engine oil.

During the 1914-18 War, no cars were manufactured in England or on the Continent – all imports coming from the US or Canada. One of the outstanding models of this era was the Dodge, which was first introduced in 1914.

Several of the car makers were experimenting with self-starters. The first I ever saw was fitted to an Italian Scat (1912) and was operated by compressed air. It wasn't very successful but it had this advantage: the compressed air



tank could be used to pump up the tyres. It was followed by an acetylene gas starter fitted to an Abbott-Detroit, and then a 24 volt electric on a Cadillac.

But the Dodge had the first really reliable one. It was coupled to the engine by a silent chain and was a single unit system which worked both as a motor and generator. Dodge also had the benzine tank at the rear but as this was before the days of vacuum tanks or electric/mechanical pumps the fuel was raised to the carburettor by a handpump mounted on the dash. Like the Model T, Dodge did not produce a new model each year as was the custom in those days, and the car remained substantially the same until 1926 when it was hopelessly out of date. To my mind it was a great pity as in the early stages of its history, Dodge was years ahead of its competitors.

Up Cambridge Hill

In the early days of motor cars, the degree of merit was judged by its ability to negotiate steep hills in high gear and the main testing ground here was Cambridge Hill, a name unfortunately forgotten as it is now known to most as Duke Street Hill. Cambridge Hill in the early part of the century was much steeper and the bends much sharper than they are today. The first car to make it to the top was a Model T owned by Mr George Watt and the hill became widely known as a testing ground of motor ability. So much so, that in the programme for the Cambridge Peace Day Celebrations in 1919, the organisers included a motor car and motor cycle speed test up Cambridge Hill, and a further motorcycle climb up Salthurst Hill, which in those days was a track with a grade of about 1 in 2. Modesty prevents me from telling you who won all three events.



If I might digress for a moment I think it is a great pity that old place names are gradually disappearing. For instance, the stretch of road eight miles out towards Tirau was Ferguson's Gully. In the old days it was a gully but now the deviated road runs round the top. The hill past the Golf Links, now sometimes called Ireland's Hill or Golfinks Hill, was the Gorge. If anyone interested takes the trouble to walk up the old road, the reason for this name will be instantly apparent. The hill from Ferguson's Bridge up towards Shakespeare Street was Chitty's Hill. The one

down to the Abattoirs was Chubb's Hill, while that adjacent to the new Meat Works was Bell's Hill. Walker's Gully between Pukerimu and Kaipaki was, for a time in recent years called Fisher's Hill but now, happily, it has reverted to its original name. The little dip half way to Hamilton was and is still known to some as Day's Gully. Leslie's Gully is the one at the end of the Tamahere Straight – the hill this end being Poplar Hill, the one at the other end which has just been widened and reformed, Steele Hill. It is good to know that many of the old names still remain. These include Mystery Creek, Bridgewater Hill, French Pass, Sanitorium Hill, etc.

During the First World War years and for some time afterwards the pattern of motoring remained substantially the same. Fords sold in ever increasing numbers possibly because, at the price, they looked like being the best value. But Dodges, Buicks, Maxwells and Dorts all had their own following. Tyres were continually on the improve. The standard tyre was known as "fabric" and the more expensive premier quality "cord". Somewhere about 2000 miles was their early life, but as time went on and the quality improved this figure was gradually increased. Many of the makers were now fitting demountable rims but only supplied four tyres, the fifth tyre being charged as an extra. Tyres up to about 1920 were all "beaded edge" or "clincher" and were stretched over the rim like a bicycle tyre – some were held on by security bolts, but after 1920 "straight side" tyres began to come on the market. They were most satisfactory and have remained to the present day although the method of fitting is somewhat different. Tyres up to and for several years after this period were of the high pressure type, and pressures were anything from 60 to 80lbs on wheels up to 27" in diameter. About 1925, balloon or low pressure tyres were introduced and since then pressures and wheel diameters have been gradually reduced until, today, we find the average pressure is 24/28lbs and the wheel diameter is 12/14". Today it is nothing unusual to find a set of tyres lasting 25,000 miles with the cases still in good enough condition to be retreaded.

The carriage of luggage was always a problem and old time luggage grids were limited in their capacity. In an endeavour to overcome this difficulty a popular innovation of the day was a large canvas bag which rested on the running board on the driver's side and was held on by a heavy strap round the windscreen post in front and a similar fitting round the hood anchorage at the rear. These bags held an enormous amount of luggage and odds and ends but had the disadvantage of putting the offside of the car out of action. It was no uncommon sight to see a car on tour with portmanteaux and sundry bags of luggage strapped on at every conceivable vantage point round the outside of the car. Luggage boots as we know them today did not start to make their appearance until 1935.

Mr Souter's speech will conclude in our next issue.



Te Ihingarangi

Part 9 of a history of the Karapiro-Maungatautari area by Te Kaapo Clark and Lyn Tairi. This chapter takes up the history after the Battle of Rangiriri and the imprisonment of Tioriori.

1800

KO NGĀTI RAUKAWA, NGĀTI KOROKI, NGĀTI WAIRERE, NGĀTI HAUA

After losing several battles the Kingitanga Maori retired to Maungatautari and established themselves at Te Tiki o Te Ihingarangi, where they modified the pa in preparation for musket warfare. By December 1863 they were ready and the pa was strong. The British realised this and simply settled down in front of it.

On 5 April [1864], after waiting three days, the Maori evacuated Te Tiki, probably because they had exhausted its supplies. Ngāti Koroki had also fortified a hilltop by Whareturere, and a hilltop across the stream between the two. The new pa was called Porewa.

Wiremu Tamihana took Ngāti Haua home to Peria (near Matamata) and Ngāti Koroki left their homes to disperse into the bush, or moved south to Taupo. Those that stayed in the bush were able to live there without being detected.

Ngāti Koroki probably returned within the year when peace was negotiated and the aukati (confiscation) boundary line drawn up. In December 1864 Governor George Grey signed a proclamation authorising the confiscation of 1,202,172 acres of Waikato land. (Later 314,364 acres were returned, leaving 887,908 acres confiscated.) The aukati line ran through the middle of the Pukekura range above Karapiro, with all the land to the north being confiscated. The local militia built a redoubt above Te Tiki o Te Ihingarangi, and an uneasy peace prevailed. Kainga (villages) destroyed by the troops would not be inhabited again, except for Te Wera a to Atua, which was not destroyed and was reoccupied. New homes were established at Tioriori and Taane.

Tioriori never fully recovered from the war, although he did continue his rounds with Tamihana. He had lost a great deal of land by the confiscation. Also as the Weekly News said in his obituary “being kept in prison is a great punishment for a Maori chief, and [Tioriori] never quite recovered his influence and spirits.” Tioriori died Friday 6 September 1867 at Maungatautari.



Aukati line defining confiscated Maori land after the Waikato War.
Ref: *Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand*.

10 Green Bottles 🎵

Well actually, we have considerably more in our collection and that's why **WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

We have dozens of bottles that need to be individually numbered, measured, described, photographed and stored. So we are holding a two hour working bee on **Monday 16 May at 7pm** at the museum. It will consist of a conveyor belt of people who will each be given a task to record the bottles' details in our catalogue.

NO COMPUTER EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

NEAT HANDWRITING A MUST!

Bruce Dean will be there to give tips on how to date old bottles, to share stories about their history, and to explain why these bottles merit a place in the museum's collection.

You will really enjoy this working bee. If you think you would like to join us, please call me (Karen) on **07 827 3319** to secure your spot.

