



## Tēnā koe from Grant



Thank you to those members who attended our AGM.

We presented our vision for the Historical Society and Museum which is about awakening wonder and curiosity about Cambridge's people and places.

Through our strategic goals we are reaching out to the Cambridge community both digitally and physically with our collection and research archives. The new school history curriculum, with its push for New Zealand history to be taught in our schools, provides an opportunity for the museum to play a prominent role in sharing local stories with students. I am excited that your committee, museum staff and volunteers are turning our plan into action.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our committee for their support during the past year. Thank you to Vice-President Nigel Salter for his HR work during the year; to Treasurer Jeff Nobes, who has a busy role where much of the work happens behind the scenes. Jeff shoulders the full financial burden, and the Society is dependent on his financial management; to Secretary Jo Barnes, and committee members Amiel Bates, Fiona Faris, Paul Garland, Laurie Graham and Lyndall Hermitage, for their assistance and wise counsel during the year.

I would also like to acknowledge Karen Payne for her excellent work as newsletter editor over the past year – and also her assistance with the sterling work Carole Hughes has done over the past 18 months for the *Backchat* feature in the *Cambridge News*.

Remember to look out for our exclusive calendar of events for Friends of the Museum in 2023 as there will be lots of opportunities for you to connect with like-minded people and celebrate Cambridge's heritage.

Merry Christmas to you all.

**Grant Middlemiss**  
President

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## Tēnā koutou and greetings

Our final newsletter for 2022 is here! Thanks to Karen, our editor, who has spent the year hunting out the fascinating Cambridge stories, and to CHS members and friends who have shared their family tales and reminiscences.

So many of you joined us at our first pop-up exhibition at Arnold Cottage in Te Awa Lifecare Village titled *Having fun: Photos from the 1960s and 1970s*. By the end of the weekend, many of the subjects in the photographs had been identified making our Collection a much stronger record. If you'd like to find out more, the exhibition is available on our website here: [cambridgemuseum.org.nz/passion-for-art/](http://cambridgemuseum.org.nz/passion-for-art/)

As summer arrives, we've been getting ready for a return of international tourists and will be adding a few new touches to our exhibitions. There will be a new display focusing on archaeological finds in our area plus a fresh focus on some of our recent acquisitions as part of the *Connections* series. For the children and young at heart, we also have a new activity sheet, which includes a (sweet) reward.

If you're exploring your own family history or a local topic these holidays, pop in and see us. We are open every day (except Christmas Day) 10am-4pm Mondays to Fridays, 10am-2pm Weekends and Public Holidays. Our friendly staff and volunteers will be happy to provide guidance.

Very best wishes for 2023.

Ngā mihi o te Kirihimete me te Tau Hou,

**Elizabeth Harvey**  
Museum Manager

*Elizabeth hosting Passion for Art at Te Awa Lifecare. Photograph by Mary Anne Gill © Cambridge News*





## The Life and Times of Bert Simpson

*We hold many reminiscences and life experiences recorded in print from early Cambridge residents. This is an excerpt from an autobiography written in Tauranga in 1996 by Bertie Simpson. His parents were farmers William and Julia Simpson who were involved in the Duke of Cambridge Lodge and the Methodist Church in Cambridge.*

I was born in Cambridge at Mrs Murphy's nursing home on 14 March 1916. I had one brother, George, who was nearly five years older than me.

At that time, my father had a farm on the Taotaoroa hills some nine miles from Cambridge in the direction of Matamata. The farm at



Taotaoroa was a sheep and cattle farm some 600 acres in size. Dad did quite a bit of cropping in the way of growing swedes for winter feed. He would take the two of us over the farm with him on a large sledge with two or more large draught horses. Dad had a fox terrier which always went with us as well as his working dog. The terrier was for hunting out rabbits, but the poor little dog got roped in for other jobs at times. When Dad was working down a paddock for swedes with the tine harrows, there was a small piece broken off one of the sections. My brother used to harness up the dog and make him pull this little piece around alongside Dad with the horse drawn set.

Dad made up a trolley for my brother out of badly worn landwheels off the ploughs that he used, but there were none available when I wanted a trolley. Instead, Dad made some wheels out of a reasonably round branch and used small branches for axles. There were plenty of hills around so we had no end of fun with our carts.

The rabbits were a real problem and from time to time Dad got trappers in. I can remember seeing piles of rabbit carcasses as high as the fence. Skins were worth a shilling to one shilling and threepence each so George and I used to trap some to get a little pocket money. The skins were stretched over a wire to dry out. My father wire netted the two front paddocks to keep the rabbits out, but it was not 100% successful as they burrowed under the fence.

The school at Karapiro was about 4½ miles away so it was quite a job for a little fellow to get to and fro each day. George rode on a horse and a lot of the time I was the back seat passenger, but during the milking season I went in a light wagon.

A number of farmers, including my dad, milked six or eight cows by hand, separated the milk and sent a small can of cream to the factory just near the school. The eldest daughter of a neighbour close by used to drive the two

horses in the wagon, pick up cans of cream on the way, deliver them to the factory and then go to school. I'm not sure how things worked out for coming home because several of us used to walk home at times. We used to take a short cut over a hill and sometimes we would see a cloud of dust on the main road. We knew it was Mr Alford a neighbour who lived beyond Dad's farm. He was the only one in the district who owned a car. We hurried to get back on the road because we knew we could get a ride.

Sometimes I had a problem when I got to the road gate when I came home on my own. The few cows that Dad milked were grazed in two of the front paddocks and one big spotted cow with long curled horns didn't like me around. Once I got inside the gate, down she came, so I had to get through the fence and go through another paddock. One day, Mum had the cows in the yard and was milking one in the shed. My spotty friend was standing in the corner, but as soon as she saw me, she put her beady eye on me. To get to Mum I had to go the full length of the shed, so I plucked up courage and made a dash. Spotty had other ideas and she pinned me against the wall with her two big horns around me. A scream brought Mum onto the scene and all was well.



*Kerosene Hand Lamp  
Ref 293*

We had no electric power in those days and our water was tank supply with water caught off the roof of the house. Cooking was done on a coal range which also heated the hot water. My brother and I used to have our bath in a tin bath placed in front of the coal range. Kerosene lamps and candles were our source of light. There was a plenteous supply of ti tree on the farm so that provided all our heating, etc.

We used to collect our mail from a small building about a half mile down the road. Miss Nora Bruce used to deliver the mail to farms up to that point in her gig, but those living beyond had a box number in this building and we would collect it from there.

It was probably in 1921-22 when Dad was ill with the bad flu that was going around at that time. He had to bring a load of ti tree from the back of the farm and while doing that he got wet through with the result he developed pneumonia. In those days there were no drugs and Dad spent just on four months in the Waikato Hospital and he was in a very weak state when he came home. Mum's father persuaded Dad to sell the farm, so that ended our life in the Taotooroa hills.





## Te Ihingarangi

Part 13 of a history of the Karapiro-Maungatautari area by Te Kaapo Clark and Lyn Tairi.

### KO NGATI KOROKI, NGATI HAUA, NGATI WAIRERE

With the purchase of the Pukekura Block, there was no longer Māori occupation of the Karapiro area. During this century Ngāti Koroki have drifted away in search of employment. But hui such as tangi, weddings, 21st birthdays and land meetings draw large numbers of whānau who call Maungatautari home. Ngāti Haua are still concentrated around Matamata and Ngāti Wairere around Hukanui. Both Ngāti Haua and Ngāti Wairere continue to have strong associations with the area.

The Ministry of Works' decision to build a hydro dam at Arapuni in 1924 helped to reinforce the relationship between Ngāti Koroki, Ngāti Haua and Ngāti Wairere when men from these hapū came to Arapuni seeking work. Work on the dam was completed in 1927. Horahora had been built before 1920 privately for the Waihi Gold-mining Company.

Karapiro was started in the late 1930s, but work on the dam was suspended in 1942 because of the Second World War. The dam was finally completed in 1947.

Taupua Winikerei, Tewi Tairi, Temera Heke Te Tirewi Tairi, Wina Tante, Tewha Winikerei Tuwhakaraua Taute, Percy Taute and Piiwhi Pouaka from Ngāti Koroki; Kingi Taui from Te Arawa; Tekira Davis from Whanganui; Pop, Harry, Peter and Bob Flavell, from Ngapuhi; Frank and Walter Smith from Tauranga, are some of the men who worked on the dam construction. They, along with their families, lived at the village specially constructed to accommodate the workers (pictured). After the dam was completed, many moved on to work on the next dam project. Maraetai (first generated power in 1952), Whakamaru (1956), Atiamuri (1958), Waipapa and Ohakuri (1961) and Aratiatia (1964) were all hydro dam projects on the Waikato River.



## Farewell to Frances

We were all sad to learn that Frances Hyde was retiring as one of our longest serving volunteers.

She began volunteering nearly 16 years ago in February 2007. Since then, she has come in weekly to digitally index Cambridge's local paper *The Waikato Independent*. To do this she had to master Microsoft Access and ensure that each index entry was to a standard format.

Volunteers have been working on the digital index since 1997. It begins in the year 1904 and will carry on over a period of 90 years. Our database provides researchers with a table of every entry listed on a particular name or topic. This means you can look up only what you need, rather than trawling through everything online in Papers Past. Along with current volunteers Margaret Clow, Gill Milton and Joan McCathie, Frances has been instrumental in pushing this project along. The team is now working on the year 1950, and enjoy reminiscing or learning about Cambridge's way of life back then.

Elizabeth and I already miss Frances's company over a cup of tea each Thursday. We wish her all the best.

**Below:** Frances in 2007, and with fellow volunteer Joan McCathie (L) in 2021.





## Events highlights for 2022

### Working bees



### Visit to Ross Brothers Muscle Car Garage



### Demonstration of glass art by Di Tocker



### A series of art soirees



## New additions to the Collection

Here are some of the new items offered by the public to the Society for their Museum collection:

**Cambridge Repertory Programme** for "Godspell. A rock Musical 27 April – 4 May 1985". Does anyone remember this production?



**Art and Craft Education** – a magazine for all teachers of art and craft: Bound magazines from August-December 1939; Bound magazines from January-August 1940. Originally owned by Cambridge teacher Tom Voyle, namesake of Voyle Park.

**Allwill family photographs and archives** including Great War Certificate, Egypt souvenir, Army Pay Wallet, and *The Digger's Guide to German*.

Bound copy of **Cambridge Primary and District High School Centenary 1866-1966** with signatures of the Executive Committee inside the cover.

**2010 World Rowing Championships:** official souvenir programme, "Karapiro 2010", *Waikato Times* special event publication, 6 November 2010, supporter's flag and a promotional tag.

**Leamington Bowling Club memorabilia of Ray Moncur**, including jacket and necktie, lapel badges, photos and certificates.

**Arnold Cottage memorabilia**, including family archives, paintings, books, prints and kitchenware, from the 1890s to the 1960s. The Arnold Cottage still stands as a centrepiece to Te Awa Lifecare retirement village.

