

Thanking those who care for our history

Back in March, a party from the Historical Society visited Hanatoria, a unique local heritage home in the Tauwhare area. This lovely home was built in the late 19th century for Karika Paeahu and Parepumai Te Whetuiti, a couple who played a prominent role in the affairs of their locality, serving both Māori and European communities. It is now cared for by the Te Weki family who have carried out a substantial renovation programme, recognising the value that they place on their home and the links with their family heritage. Heritage New Zealand has acknowledged the historic value of the house and granted it a Heritage 2 listing.



The Cambridge Water Tower is another historic structure with a Heritage 2 listing, and it is encouraging that it looks set to stay, subject to the removal of the water tank and some other modifications. It is important that as a community we respect these historic buildings, which remain an important, visible link to our past, adding so much to the character of our town. Thank you also to those members who recently made submissions to the Council regarding the future of the Water Tower.

We were delighted to receive a grant from Mercury recently and this has been applied to the installation of new lights in our museum display cabinets. Cambridge Real Estate generously sponsored our Buckingham Photographic Exhibition held in partnership with the Town Hall Community Trust as part of the Autumn Festival. We are grateful for the support of these businesses.

The Committee would also like to thank Bev and Bruce Dean for their continued assistance in delivering newsletters by hand. Bruce has also recently cleaned the Cambridge Railway sign and kissing gates at Lakewood, and is renovating the water pump in front of the museum.

Jeff Nobes, Acting Chairman

What's on

Students from Cambridge and Hamilton have been visiting the museum recently. Their questions and responses have given us plenty of ideas about how to create meaningful connections with our Collection, and we are exploring these with Committee member and educationalist, Kirsty Wyndham.

Our recent pop-up exhibition, *Capturing Cambridge*, the Reg Buckingham Exhibition, created in partnership with the Town Hall Community Trust, succeeded in putting many in the picture!



Mary Wright beside a photo of herself (with Joy Cooper, Adrienne Beer, Gil Suisted and Margaret Wilson) taken in 1975 on Duke Stret before the demolition of the BNZ. The entire exhibition is now online on Kōtuia ngā Kete <https://shorturl.at/kDIPX>

Many of you have kindly offered to be interviewed for our new project **Voices of Cambridge**. You have not been forgotten. Progress has been slow as winter illnesses have left their mark. Many thanks for your patience.

Finishing touches have been added to the **Lakewood heritage panels**. These are a collaboration between Lakewood Body Corporate, Ngāti Koroki Kahukura Trust, What's the Story, and the museum. They ensure that the "kissing gates" and Cambridge sign at the Lake Street entrance make more sense to visitors.

In July, we will commemorate the liberation of Cambridge's French sister city, **Le Quesnoy**. A display in the Research Room will tell the unique story, investigate the Cambridge connection and discover what inspired Fred Graham when he designed the sculpture in the Cambridge Domain. A Le Quesnoy brick will be on display.

Many thanks to artist Carole Hughes who is championing the museum's exhibition at Arnold Cottage in November's **Passion for Art**. More details to follow.

**COMING
SOON**

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY
DETAILS WILL FOLLOW**

Saturday 21 September 2024

House Tour: Dingley Dell

Friday 25 October 2024

Warren Gumbley, *The Waikato Horticultural Complex: Adaptation of Polynesian agronomy to a temperate environment*

Elizabeth, Karen and Kate



Journal of a voyage from Liverpool to Melbourne by Geo Couper

Would you choose to travel to the other side of the world on a ship reliant solely on the weather and the skill of its crew – with no stopovers and few home comforts? In our archives is a journal written by George Couper that begins in June 1852, and gives lively accounts of sea voyages in Victorian times.

We know little about George Couper, other than he chose to travel from Liverpool to Melbourne and back twice. He kept a journal which he left to his son Boston who, with wife Katherine, arrived in Cambridge in 1898. Boston was born in Edinburgh in 1873 and seems to have been a man of independent means. He was a life member of the Waikato Hunt and assisted it financially by putting on plays and concerts. Katherine was an enthusiastic worker for the St Andrew's Church, and played bridge, golf and croquet. Boston died of heart failure in 1941 and Katherine died ten months later. Both are buried at Hautapu cemetery.



Their daughter Miss Joan Couper (pictured) was an active member of the Red Cross. She took a leading part in second-hand shop Jumble Around in Leamington, which helped finance Resthaven. She was musical, and participated in the activities of St Andrew's Church. She died in Cambridge in 1980.

Her grandfather's journal is interesting to descendants of immigrants who initially landed in Australia during the gold rush before settling here. We think George was in his late teens/early 20s when he began his journal.

Liverpool, Thursday 24 June 1852

On board the *Tippoo Saib*, Captain Stewart. Hauled out into the River Mersey.

Friday 25 June. Fair wind as far as Holyhead. Got underway with a fine breeze. Everything all confusion on board owing to the number of passengers. At night, some of them dancing to a fiddle and trumpet. Double reefed topsails.

Saturday 26 June. The wind right ahead. The crew busy in getting the provisions up. Everything still in confusion. A very few of the passengers sick. Everyone seems very happy, plenty of singing at night. Being Captain of our Mess of six, turned to and baked, along with one in the mess, a plum pudding for Sunday dinner.

Sunday 27 June. A beautiful day, several ships in sight off the coast of Ireland. The wind still right ahead. Some of the passengers singing psalms, and everyone orderly. Although there are two priests on board, they did not have any service as they would not be allowed. Provisions are served out two or three times a day when each Captain of the Mess is to be there to receive the allowance for his mess. Each in his turn has to be Captain for one week.

Tuesday 29 June. The sea running very high and the wind still the same quarter and a good many of the passengers getting sick and wishing themselves in old England again, and some getting many a tumble upon deck, not having got their sea legs yet. At 8pm came in to blow very hard. Took in the mainsail and jibs and double reefed all the topsails.

Thursday 1 July. Sailing in the Bay of Biscay. A heavy swell, but very little wind. Passengers now recovered from their sickness and enjoying themselves, some with singing and others with dancing.

Saturday 3 July. A fine light breeze with top gallant ten sails set. Passengers dancing, jumping and amusing themselves both fore and aft. At 10pm the wind changed right ahead.

Sunday 4 July. The wind still ahead. At 10am the purser read prayers on the poop, and gave out the 100 psalm. There were about two hundred passengers attended. The priests that were on board, with those that belonged to the church of Rome had services between decks.

Monday 5 July. The wind fair, raining very hard in the morning but cleared up about 12 o'clock with a fine breeze. The cabin passengers are exercising themselves in the evening with leaping, etc.

Tuesday 6 July. The wind still favourable with top gallant studding sails set with a fine breeze. Passengers very quiet today. Provisions not giving satisfaction. Everyone grumbling and no wonder.

Friday 9 July. Now enjoying the NE trade winds. Passed Madeira, although too far off to see it being 35 miles distant which I was sorry at, as I expected to have managed to have got some fruit and a bottle or two of wine, which one would relish very much at sea. After tea, joined into a dance or two although we wanted the other sex as partners, and felt much the better, as it is the only kind of exercise one can get. At 10pm one of the second cabin passengers came and informed the captain that Mr Burgoin, one of the passengers, had a pistol and a dagger below his pillow and was threatening to kill Mr Chestnutt who was lying on his bed quite drunk, who had it appears been stealing his brandy, from which a quarrel had sprung up. But the captain went and took his arms from him, and they are to have separate berths after this. There have been several petty thefts take place among the steerage and intermediate passengers. But they are to keep watch time about, which will be the means of preventing it for the future. Sailed 212 miles today which is considered very good.

Sunday 11 July. Rose at 5am and got a thorough washing by the boatswain, who poured water upon me with a hose the same as that of fire engines and felt much the better of it, and intend doing the same every morning. There were several that followed my example. At 10am the purser read prayers upon the poop, but the priests did not attempt to do so between decks, as they were so much made a fool of by those that did not belong to their church.

Monday 12 July. Charming day. Sailed 202 miles had a bathe in the morning. Read all day and at night had a first rate dance with one or two of the ladies.

Tuesday 13 July. The weather still turning warmer, sailed 201 miles. Saw a good many of flying fish. In the evening there were a regular set to with two of the second cabin passengers at wrestling, but on board a ship is no place for that kind of exercise as one runs the risk of getting their head broke.

Wednesday 14 July. The day fine and blowing a fine breeze. Sailed 206 miles. We are now in the tropics. Saw a regular shoal of flying fish on both sides of the ship.



Thursday 15 July. Rose at 5am as usual and had my bathe. The weather very sultry. Sailed 167 miles. It is now dark at 7 o'clock, which seems strange in the middle of summer. There is a difference of an hour and forty minutes by the time in Liverpool.

Saturday 17 July. Quite becalmed and the weather extremely hot, but about 7pm it came a regular squall and a tremendous rain which lasted for three or four hours, the passengers availing themselves of the water by catching all they could for washing. We only sailed 44 miles.

Sunday 18 July. Quite a calm, sailed 72 miles. There was no service upon the poop but one of the passengers read a sermon and a chapter, gave out two psalms. At 1 o'clock pm there was a little child buried who had died from scarlet fever. She was sewed up into canvas, and a large stone made fast to her feet and the colours laid over her, and the purser read the funeral service over her and then she was launched into the deep sea. It was raining hard at the time, which added more to the melancholic scene.

Monday 19 July. Squally during the night and very sultry during the day. Good many of the passengers sleeping upon deck during the night, it is so hot down below. Sailed 41 miles.

Thursday 22 July. Squally and the wind right ahead with tremendous fall of rain. The sailors employed filling all the empty casks. Turned to and washed all my shirts, stockings and a pair of trousers which would have done credit to a washerwoman. I stood out all the time during the rain, and was wet through in the course of a minute or two whilst washing.

Friday 23 July. The wind still ahead and rather blowing a stiff breeze and a fine morning for getting the wet clothes dried. The wind right ahead.

Saturday 24 July. Beating against the SE trades, the day sultry. Wrote part of a letter to my mother.

Sunday 25 July. A pleasant day. Prayers on the poop in the forenoon by the purser and service on the main deck by one of the passengers. Signalled the Ann Brig from London to the Cape of Good Hope, the wind still ahead.

Monday 26 July. A very heavy rain in the morning, but cleared up before breakfast and blowing half a gale of wind but the opposite course that it should blow, the foretopsail hard sprung and had to be taken down and a new one put up in its place, which employed all hands up till 12 o'clock pm.

Wednesday 28 July. The wind more favourable, the ship lying SW and expect to be at the line by Friday.

Thursday 29 July. Made the line [Equator] at 12am. The sailors were disappointed in not getting the old custom kept up, by Neptune being allowed to come on board. But the captain would not hear of it. After it was dark two or three of the crew attempted to frighten some of the passengers. They succeeded in getting some money from them, but the captain heard of it and soon put a stop to it. A great many of the passengers got drunk on the head of crossing the line, some actually believed that the carpenter was getting his axe sharpened to cut the line. Signalled a homeward bounder so as to get reported, but it was blowing too hard to send any letters on board. Sailed 199 miles.

Friday 30 July. An outward bounder in company, but too far off to learn her name. The day still warm but in the course of eight or ten days the weather will be getting much colder.

Saturday 31 July. Quite a calm, and no vessels in sight, but sprung up a fine breeze in the evening. At 10pm there were a regular battle with four of the passengers but were separated by the captain.

Sunday 1 August. Blowing pretty fresh in the morning. Had divine service on the poop in the forenoon. A heavy rain in the afternoon, and filled two cans with water for washing. Sailed 132 miles.

Wednesday 4 August. The weather getting more temperate now. The passengers busy in getting their luggage out of the forehold, which they are allowed once a month. We mustered three fiddles tonight on the poop, practising for the opening of the theatre that is to be held on Saturday night by some of the passengers under the patronage of Captain Stewart.

Thursday 5 August. The day very agreeable, with a light breeze. Some of the cabin passengers taking a shot with their guns and firing at bottles in the water. Sailed 111 miles.

Friday 6 August. A most beautiful day, and quite becalmed. To look around you would think you were in the centre of a large loch. The horizon appears like the hills in the Highlands, a most splendid scene to look upon. Everything is so quiet and still around except the living map that is on board our noble ship. On account of the fineness of the day, the theatre was open at half past 6pm with five musicians and a crowded house, main top, rigging, boats and every place one could get a peep. The play was a Savage worried by a Maid, which was the name of the two gentlemen that performed the piece, which went off with great spirit. There were a Miss Hall that sung "Come with me to Fairyland" and there were a gentleman that sung an Irish song and concluded with a speech by Mr Burgoin written by himself, which was received with great applause. The passengers then commenced to dance and kept it up with great glee till 10 o'clock. Captain Stewart got three cheers, and finished with God Save the Queen. But it was only to commence another Ball for most of the passengers got quite drunk. It was one of the greatest days that has happened on Board of the *Tippoo Saib*.

George Couper's diary which contains an unlabelled photo possibly of son Boston at his home in Cambridge: CM2421/3



This account is abridged. We will continue with George's adventures, including his foray into gold mining, in a later issue.



Roland "Poly" Hill



This article was published in the First Edition of the Cambridge Historical Society Journal in October 1967.

"When one considers the great wealth of history in the Cambridge district, it is regrettable that there has been no local museum until now.

While past Borough Councils gave their support in principle, the rapid growth of the Cambridge Borough made it necessary to undertake more essential projects.

For a number of years, a small group in the Cambridge Historical Society endeavoured to create public interest in a museum. The Cambridge Centenary in 1964 seemed a golden opportunity for making such a scheme a centennial project, but other groups with other needs also competed for support and so the museum did not eventuate.

However, over the years one enthusiast, in the person of Mr R H Hill of Leamington, worked away quietly, collecting articles of historical interest, besides old books and photographs. Careful records were kept of each item. From time to time, "Poly" Hill organised small displays. During the Cambridge Centenary he was responsible for the magnificent display of Māori artifacts, old guns and various other articles used by the early pioneers. For the first time, many people became aware of the value of a museum in this district.

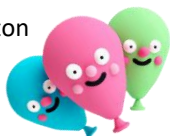
Toward the end of 1966, the Cambridge Borough Council made available to the Historical Society, the old sub-station building at the intersection of Shakespeare and Browning streets in Leamington.

In March of this year (1967), members of the Society under the direction of Mr Hill renovated and painted the building with a view to using it as the Cambridge Museum. No effort was spared to make the premises neat and attractive. For many months, Mr Hill laboured increasingly to fulfil a dream. The Cambridge Museum is very largely the result of his unflagging efforts. Now in his 80th year, Poly Hill is as energetic and full of enthusiasm as ever."

Roland "Poly" Hill died 16 June 1980 at the age of 92. The Museum moved to its current premises in 1984.

A warm welcome to our new members

Clive and Jean Denton
Ruth Strawbridge
Jenny Berczely
C. Joy Harding



Upcoming Events



TUESDAY 9 JULY 2024 AT 10AM
Cambridge Stud Heritage Centre.
Meet at 128 Discombe Road,
Tamahere.

Be quick, as numbers are limited.

This is a must-see destination for anyone with an interest in thoroughbred horse breeding and racing. Inside there are interactive displays, photographs, trophies, and memorabilia that tell the story of locally born Sir Patrick Hogan and his champion sire, Sir Tristram's contribution to the racing industry. The present and future operations of Cambridge Stud is also at the forefront of this exhibition.

RSVP admin@cambridgemuseum.org.nz by 5 July



TUESDAY 20 AUGUST 2024
Kihikihi Police House and
Temple Cottage. Cost: \$3
and includes afternoon tea.

Kihikihi is home to the only police house still on its original site and in public ownership in the country. It combines the constable's dwelling, police station, ablution building and jailhouse –all located at Ratau Reserve. Inside the restored buildings are artefacts, games, old books, costumes and much more. Enjoy a tour and themed afternoon tea. Not to be missed.

RSVP admin@cambridgemuseum.org.nz by 14 August

FRIDAY 23 AUGUST 2024

Richard von Sturmer, *Walking with Rocks – Dreaming with Rivers – My Year in the Waikato*



Richard von Sturmer is a New Zealand writer, well-known for writing the lyrics of 'There is No Depression in New Zealand'. In 2020 he was the University of Waikato's writer in residence. He explored the region, resulting in his book "Walking with Rocks – Dreaming with Rivers – My Year in the Waikato".

'An extraordinary meditation on settings across the Waikato – museums where he's the only visitor, lifestyle blocks where "you can feel history evaporating", lakes where the only images reflected are clouds.' – Tracey Slaughter

RSVP admin@cambridgemuseum.org.nz by 16 August.

