

Greetings from Jeff

To preserve our independence, it is vital that the museum is managed by a strong, forward-looking committee.

The year seems to have flown by, and it is hard to believe that it is October already and our AGM is coming up again next month on 21 November at the Bridge Club in Fort Street.

A large group of Historical Society members paid a visit to Dingley Dell on Maungatautari Road in September. The present house, designed by James Douce and built in the 1920s, is the third house built on the property which had been owned by the Vosper family for 140 years until recently. Everyone enjoyed the visit immensely and our thanks go to David and Katharine for opening their house up to the Society and for their generous hospitality.

The Museum is thriving and, under Elizabeth's direction, is developing a reputation as one of the best small museums in the country. There is a danger, however, that we could lose our museum if our annual grant from the Waipā District Council is reduced or withdrawn. The museum is very much part of the fabric and makes an important contribution to the community and character of our town. It is imperative that Cambridge retains its own museum and collection.

As the AGM approaches in November, we are appealing to members of the community with an interest in history and who have good managerial skills to contact us. We would love to chat about what the Committee does and how you may help in keeping the momentum going. We are looking forward to welcoming you all at the AGM on Thursday, 21 November at 7 pm.

Jeff Nobes, Acting President

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM

We look forward to seeing **Mike Kilgour, Ann Devlin, Michael Gore, Anne Macky, Carol-Ann Torrie and Sara Young** at future events. Welcome to the Cambridge Historical Society.



What's new

Who doesn't enjoy a Devonshire Tea? Our thanks to Angela (right), Jan (left) and their team at the **Kihikihi Museum** for hosting such an enjoyable afternoon for our Historical



Society Friends. Many of the objects to be found there brought back happy memories – although some were a mystery to us all! Thanks to Michael Jeans for the photo.

School visits to the museum have kept us lively during the colder winter months and now we're full steam ahead in preparing displays for this Summer. Karen has been creating a display about influential retiree and theologian, William Rout (see overleaf) which will be on display at Arvida Lauriston Park while Elizabeth has been collaborating with Andrew Johnstone to capture the last days of Lyceum House. We are also collaborating with the Cambridge Harrier's committee to prepare a display celebrating their 75th Anniversary.

A Passion for Art: 9 and 10 November, Arnold Cottage, 1866 Hamilton Road

If you missed our Autumn Festival exhibition at the Town Hall, here's another chance to see some of Reg Buckingham's fascinating photography of local people and places, taken during the 1960s-80s. Many thanks to Carol Hughes for inviting us to be part of a Passion for Art which is for one weekend only and features thirteen venues around the town where local artists display their works. Make a weekend of it and support our local talent.

NEW: Moving images by Walter Beer

Also featuring at Arnold Cottage in November will be film footage of Cambridge in the 1960s. It was filmed by Walter Beer and kindly digitised and donated to the museum by his grandson, Bruce Beer. If you have ever wanted to see the *Boatmobile* in action at the Lion's Market, here's your chance!

Jumble Around grant

Many thanks to Jumble Around for their donation towards conservation supplies for our archives. Jumble Around does a wonderful job of supporting community organisations and we are grateful for their assistance in caring for our archive collection.

Call for volunteers

If you would like to join us for an hour or two at the Arnold Cottage to welcome visitors and talk with them about our histories, we'd love you to join us. Please call Elizabeth on 827 3319 or email (address below) to express your interest.

Elizabeth, Karen and Kate



Cambridge – The Best Place to Live

BY KAREN PAYNE

Doctor Roberts of Devonport¹ ... said I required a more bracing air than the North Shore and as I had lived so many years by the seaside, he recommended I should go inland to Cambridge in the Waikato as the best place.

William Rout, 1893



William Rout (pictured) was an affluent businessman from Nelson. He founded a land, estate and commission agency in 1862, and held office as a member of the Nelson Provincial Council 1873-76 and Provincial Treasurer 1874-75.

After retiring in 1887, William and first wife Harriet decided to return to England. Harriet died at sea, leaving William and their three grown up sons and four daughters.

William suffered from poor health, and when he was advised by his doctor in 1893 to retire to Cambridge, he immediately took his new wife Annie, their young son Nelson and baby Wilhelmina to visit the town “to see how we should like the place.”

He stepped into a community undergoing significant transformation. The recent New Zealand Wars and the confiscation of Māori lands had left a lasting impact on the farming landscape. The Native Land Courts and the prosperity they had generated for local businesses had come and gone. Although the introduction of a railway link was welcomed, the town was still isolated compared to bustling Hamilton.

We stayed at Cambridge a week which is a pretty little borough of about 700 inhabitants. The town has the appearance of once doing a large business with three large hotels and a very large livery stables and other appurtenances. The whole place looks like a deserted village and the inhabitants look dispirited awaiting better times.

William Rout, 1893

The family moved in to a rented home in Alpha Street at first. Then they purchased a home on the corner of Alpha and Chapel Streets, which was eventually sold to the Catholic Church.

William Rout kept a detailed journal up until his death in 1909. It is available at the National Library. We have used his written experiences and quotations throughout this article.



Rout Homestead in Alpha Street

Whare-ora – the House of Health

[The death of baby Wilhelmina from meningitis in 1895] was a severe blow to the wife, who has a most affectionate nature, so we invited various friends to visit to take off her thoughts from her bereavement. Amongst them we had Mr Arthur Wilkinson for a change of air.

William Rout, 1895

A new form of treatment for Tuberculosis (TB) was emerging. Before the discovery of antibiotics, doctors believed that a regimen consisting of exposure to the open air at high altitudes, a cold climate, hygiene education and isolation was the most effective treatment.

The Lauriston Park homestead, named Whare-ora, was built by the Routs as a sanatorium. Annie Rout delighted in nursing and was keen to provide TB sufferers with a place to stay in Cambridge. A steady stream of visitors, both friends and patients, stayed at Whare-ora with the family throughout their time here.

Sanatoria were a hybrid between a hospital and a resort, built to maximise patients’ exposure to sunlight and clean air. The elevation of the Whare-ora property was well suited for a sanatorium.



Whare-ora with Annie Rout, William and Nelson Rout on the right

¹ Incidentally, Dr Roberts of Devonport, who advised Rout to move to Cambridge, ended up following his own advice. He moved to Cambridge in



The Box in the Barn

[We] accepted Hogan's tender for the new house @ £842 and then began moving some of our goods, storing them in the new Barn and Rooms, leaving only the furniture of two bedrooms & my study in the house and the contents of the coachhouse and workshop outside until we leave for good.

William Rout, 1900

Before Whare-ora was built, a new barn and rooms were erected on the property. In 1900, the Rout family began moving some of their goods, storing them in the barn and rooms until the new house was ready.

In 2007, a box of archives was found in the old barn, and was donated to the Cambridge Museum. Many of the archives found there were given context by Rout's meticulous journal entries.



CM3161/23: Whare-ora showing barn on the left.

The Museum is currently working on an exhibition containing some of the archives found in the box in the barn to be displayed in the main hall of the Lauriston Park Retirement Village.

Contributions to Cambridge

My benevolence is active and constantly urging me to help others as far as practicable to help themselves and to run alone.

William Rout, 1894

William Rout soon made himself known. He set up a Harmonic Society, Theosophical Society and Liberal Party Committee. He was Chairman of the Public Library, developed an archive for the Cambridge Museum and wrote the first History of Cambridge, later published in the *Waikato Argus*.

"At the quarterly meeting of St Andrew's vestry, much satisfaction was expressed at the efforts being made under Mr Rout's action and able conductorship to render a portion of the oratorio of the "Messiah" during the Christmas season, and the thanks of the Vestry were expressed to Mr Rout and all who are assisting him."

Waikato Argus, 10 October 1896

He proposed that the Public School Committee set up a technical classroom. It enabled pupils to compete in the Young People's Industrial Exhibition in 1897. As a result, four of the boys completed for judging: a cabinet of four drawers enclosed with an outer door, an upholstered music stool, a wheelbarrow and a footstool. William Rout had once been a builder in Nelson and so he, along with local tradesmen, taught in the classroom.

He had his fair share of disappointments. A large shipment of uninsured oratorio music for which he had paid was lost in a shipwreck, the Harmonic Society soon folded, and he was appalled to learn that his trusted Librarian had stolen a large sum of money from library funds.

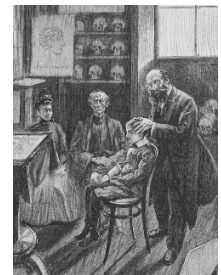
He banned Reginald Bernard Fitzpatrick from the library because of "obstreperous behaviour". Fitzpatrick became so abusive to him personally, including publicly criticising his published "History of Cambridge", that Rout took him to court. Soon afterwards, Fitzpatrick began abusing his own lawyer Frank Buckland. (This is not the first time I have written about Fitzpatrick. He was also taken to court by Mrs Murphy. Read about it in our August 2021 newsletter on our website - click on "Join In", then "Newsletters".)

Peculiar in our views

It appears from what comes to our ears that we have a reputation for kindness and hospitality but are thought to be peculiar in our views.

William Rout, 1905

Soon after their arrival, William and Annie consulted together about attending church in Cambridge "to prevent any further ostracising of the family by professing Christians" and decided on the Presbyterian Church. In his journal, William wrote scathingly about church services.



The Phrenologist, a sketch by A S Hatrick 1895

A religious freethinker, he preferred to study Theosophy². He also dabbled in Phrenology, Spiritualism and the Zodiac. Phrenology is measuring the bumps on people's heads to read their characters. By the 1890s, phrenology had been largely discredited as a pseudoscience although it remained popular for many years. William Rout often provided free readings for friends and acquaintances.

William died in 1909 at the age of 79. At the top of his gravestone in Pukerimu Cemetery are symbols surrounded by a snake devouring its tail – Theosophical icons – thus reflecting the true depth of his interest.

² Theosophy: a system that embraces a central truth underlying religion, philosophy and science.



You are cordially invited

to join us at our **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** at the Cambridge Bridge Club, Fort Street, on

THURSDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2024 AT 7PM

Guest speaker: Antanas Procuta,
Paua Architects

Call for Committee Nominations

Being a committee member is a fantastic way to give back to the community, meet new people, and gain a deeper understanding of the Cambridge area's fascinating histories.



The new 2025 Committee will be voted in on the night. If you are interested in becoming a committee member, we'd love to hear from you.

**COMING
SOON**

Part of our U3A
Partnership

FRIDAY 25 OCTOBER 2024
*The Waikato Horticultural
Complex: Adaptation of
Polynesian agronomy to a
temperate environment, by
Dr Warren Gumbley*

10.30 am, Te Awa, 1866 Hamilton Road
Please RSVP by 21 October

A wealth of archaeology relating to the intensity of Māori occupation exists in Cambridge. Much of the most recent work has been completed by Dr Gumbley and his team.

Dr Gumbley has worked as an archaeologist for over 40 years and has a PhD from the Australian National University. His main interests are the adaptation of Polynesian horticulture to New Zealand, the development of pā, the archaeology of mission stations and the Waikato Land War of 1863-1864. In this talk Dr Gumbley will consider how a system of gardening developed in the tropics was successfully transferred to the temperate climate of New Zealand.

9-10 NOVEMBER
PASSION FOR ART

Arnold Cottage, Te Awa, 10 am – 3 pm

The weekend of 9-10 November will be a second chance to see the *Capturing Cambridge* exhibition featuring photographs taken of Cambridge between the 1960s and 80s by Reg Buckingham. This pop-up display is part of the Passion for Art open studio tour featuring thirteen local artists, which is running alongside the 2024 Rotary Cambridge Garden Festival. More details are available at www.cgf.nz/passion-for-art.

Why Join the Committee?

- **Make a Difference:** By joining the committee, you'll play a key role in preserving this area's rich history and ensuring it is accessible for future generations. You'll be part of exciting projects, from updating displays, to working with schools to deliver exciting, learning experiences.
- **Community Impact:** Help shape the Society's focus by identifying priorities that bring history to life. Monthly meetings and project work offer a chance to engage with the local Council, iwi, Cambridge Community board, schools and other key stakeholders to strengthen community bonds.
- **Keep Heritage Alive:** Your efforts will help keep this area's heritage vibrant and relevant. Whether it's through archiving, promoting local activities, or creating educational experiences, your contributions will enrich the community and leave a lasting legacy.
- **Inspire the Next Generation:** Encouraging younger generations to get involved is crucial for the ongoing success of the Historical Society. Your participation helps make the society a cornerstone of local heritage, not just a club.
- **Flexible and fun:** Enjoy the flexibility of working on projects that fit your schedule. Plus, you'll gain access to historical resources, making it a rewarding experience for any history enthusiast.

For a nomination form, visit the museum, email admin@cambridgemuseum.org.nz or download forms from the museum's website here <https://cambridgemuseum.org.nz/cambridge-historical-society-agm/>

New additions to the collection

- Cambridge Motor Club (CMC) collection 1950s and 1960s
- Digital film of steam engine through Cambridge 26/6/1967 by Ken Russell
- Digital photograph: Class of 1953 Leamington Primary School, featuring Billy T James
- Digital copies of two films by Walter Beer - events in Cambridge, Pirongia, Hamilton and Ngaruawahia in the 1950s and 1960s
- Digital photographs: Leamington Primary, Cambridge Intermediate and Cambridge High School 1950 and 60s, each pupil individually identified.

