



Committee Message

Welcome to this, our final newsletter for 2024. It has been a fascinating time for the Society with new displays within the museum plus specialist walks and talks, pop-up displays and interpretation panels around the area. And we're not done yet.

At our Annual General Meeting on Thursday 21 November, our new Committee was elected:

President: *vacant*

Vice President: *vacant*

Secretary: Jo Barnes

Treasurer: Michael Gore

Members: Amiel Bates, Lisa Meehan, Heather Wellington, Jane West and Kirsty Wyndham.

Committee introductions are available on our website.

Our warmest thanks go to **Jeff Nobes** who is leaving the Committee after six years as Treasurer and a year **as Acting President**. As an experienced accountant with a passion for history, Jeff has brought essential technical skills in financial reporting, planning and strategy to his role and has made a lasting impact on the Society and Museum.

Remember to bring your family and friends to the museum this summer. Except for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, it is open every day between 10am to 2pm weekends and public holidays, and 10am to 4pm all other days. We are also featuring in the Waipā District Libraries' Reading Scheme – so watch this space.

A big thank you to Elizabeth and her team: administrator and newsletter editor Karen, collection management assistant Kate and weekend and public holiday staff Tess, Jo and Jane. Visitor numbers have increased by more than 30% this year. Well done, team!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



What's new



Beverley Bell donating a copy of her extensive research into the Bell Family for our archive, November 2024 Image: Karen Payne

Choosing an image for this article was tricky because so much has been happening. It could have been of Bruce Dean hard at work renovating the water pump outside the museum, or of Karen next to her new display at Whare-ora in Lauriston Park, or perhaps one or all of our eminent speakers including archaeologist Warren Gumbley, architect Antanas Procuta and military historian Adam Claasen, who delivered fascinating talks to our members. And don't forget, our pop-up Passion for Art photography exhibition at Arnold Cottage, Te Awa. To all of you that have made these things happen, thank you.

In the end, we chose Beverley Bell donating her detailed, illustrated family history because it is the stories of our people, past and present, that ensure that history lives within our community.

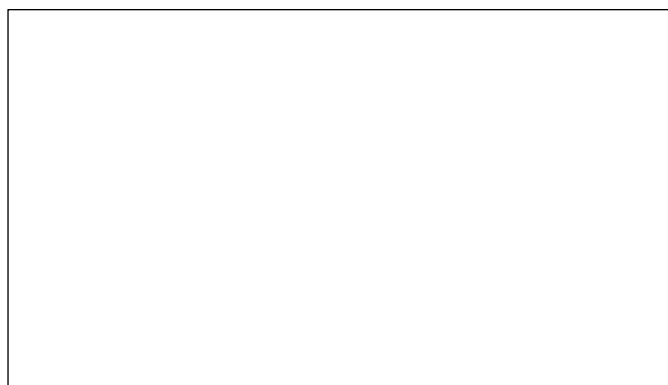
Behind Beverley in the photograph are the card index drawers which record local family histories. Thanks to Gill, Margaret, Bo, Val and Leigh for their work digitising these records so that they can be accessed anywhere at any time.

Bob McQueen has donated his recent publication *The Cambridge Star Redoubt* to our archive. It will be a useful record for researchers and we will be including a summary in a future newsletter.

Coming soon will be a new display called *Keep On Running* which celebrates the Cambridge Harriers Club's 75th Anniversary in 2025. An online display about Aotearoa Meat works is also underway. More on this later.

Please join us for a morning tea at the Museum on Monday 16 December – details on the back.

Elizabeth, Karen and Kate





Ringling in the New Year

We all have favourite memories of holiday celebrations. Let's find out how Cambridge residents have celebrated the New Year over the decades.

1876

Waikato Times 4/1/1876

New Year's Day was ushered in with the usual tin-kettling and drunkenness. A party of boisterous young fellows after having been regaled at one or two hotels, inspired by the potent fluid, carried their amusements a little too far, for not being content with the peaceful nature of their serenade they broke eight or nine panes of glass in the Manse and five or six elsewhere. There is a generally expressed wish that these ruffians would be brought to justice. I understand that they are not altogether unknown to the police.

Contrary to expectations the first day of the year was brilliantly fine so that the attendance at the races was very large, taking into consideration the fact of there being sports at Hamilton and Ngaruawahia on the same day. The arrangements were admirable, everything passed off successfully; perhaps there was a little too much time lost between the races, but of course we always expect this at our amateur meeting and it should not be grumbled at. A commodious booth was erected at which Messrs Laird and Kirkwood supplied meat and drink to the hungry and thirsty in their usual style.

Very little rowdiness was observable among those present. One young man, however, who seemed to be in a very heroic mood and who was evidently under the influence of the "flowing bowl," found a temporary residence in the lock up.

Two gentlemen tried very hard to get up a pugilistic encounter, but their intentions were frustrated by friends wiser than themselves.

1910

Waikato Independent 4/1/1910

In accordance with its annual custom, the Town Band, on New Year's Eve, assembled at the Fountain and played out the old year and welcomed in 1910, a large number of people being present when the selections were rendered. Several hilarious individuals, as usual, also gathered on the scene, and created a certain amount of fun for the onlookers. Two or three of the principal performers in the midnight scene, not being quite capable of maintaining their equilibrium, were landed in the fountain and treated to an impromptu ducking. There were a large number of people in the streets on New Year's Eve, till a late hour.



Cambridge Band in 1910 (CM2958/3/4)

1920

Waikato Independent 3/1/1927

New Year's eve in Cambridge was noticeable for the large crowds which thronged Victoria Street during shopping hours. Constantly were greetings exchanged wishing one another "A Happy New Year." One of the features of the evening was the rendering of music by the Cambridge brass band, under the genial Bandmaster Montgomery. The band played for some time in Duke and Victoria Streets. In most of the Churches watch-night services were held, and at midnight the bells of St Andrew's pealed in the New Year. Forcibly they brought to mind the lines from "In Memoriam" — "Ring out the Old, ring in the New, ring out the false, ring in the true." And thus was the birth of 1920 announced to Cambridge.

1927

Waikato Independent 4/1/1927

During the Christmas and New Year holidays the public bath was very well patronised, especially by the juveniles. A number of visitors attending the Christian Convention freely used the bath.



Cambridge Wilson Street baths (CM1547 Green collection)





Local wireless enthusiasts have had the pleasure of receiving some very fine holiday programmes during the past few days. Last week the racing results were received "on the air," and were greatly appreciated by keen enthusiasts.

The Cambridge parking place for motors, Victoria Square, is becoming increasingly popular with motorists as it becomes better known that this handy and suitable spot is available as a camping place. During the Christmas holidays quite a number of motorists put up there for a night or two, and there was an increased number camping in the Square for the New Year holidays.

During the recent holidays Cambridge maintained its reputation for orderliness and good behaviour. On New Year's Eve a young woman was arraigned before two justices of the peace, on a charge of theft, and was placed on probation for six months. This was the only case that came before the Court during the whole of the holidays.

1929

Waikato Independent 28/12/1929

The vogue of the motor car was markedly manifest in the main streets of Cambridge on Christmas Eve. Victoria Street especially was lined with three rows of cars which reached from end to end of the principal business area, while a great number of vehicles were parked in Duke Street, Alpha Street, Empire Street, and nearly every side-street. It became necessary to have two rows of cars on the eastern side of Victoria Street, both stretching the whole length with a lane between.

The parking was regularly carried out under the direction of the traffic inspector, Mr F H Green, who informed our representative that the number of cars parked in the streets was just below 600. Thanks to Mr Green's able supervision the cars were so parked that owners could move away when they desired, steps being taken to prevent the careless marking that in the past has caused so much annoyance and inconvenience.

1930

Waikato Independent 4/1/1930

New Year's Eve passed off fairly quietly in Cambridge. Early in the evening the streets were lined with people, though the crowd was not nearly as large as on Christmas Eve. With the weather conditions rather gloomy there was not the holiday enthusiasm that might have been expected. There was little noise in the early parts of the evening, but as the Old Year hastened to its end, a goodly number of the more boisterous spirits gathered at the rockery in Victoria Street. To the accompaniment of hoots, whistles and the

banging of tins, a beloved yet hated, an acclaimed yet despised, a praised yet browbeaten Old Year passed into oblivion and in its place was ushered the new 1930 with all its hopes and possibilities.

New Year's Eve did not pass without a little unseemly conduct in the vicinity of the Town Hall, the services of Constable Fleury being required to put a stop to a bout of fisticuffs that might easily have developed into a nasty affair. Dances were held at the Town Hall and the Regent Hall, there being good attendances at both places. A very jolly time was spent by those at the Town Hall, the "talkie" equipment providing the music, and as the Old Year neared its end those present entered into the spirit of the occasion right heartily and "high jinks" prevailed until the early hour of the morning.

1960

Waikato Independent, January 1960

The commendable effort of the Cambridge New Year Committee added interest for those who were not away for the holidays, and the New Year Carnival created a good night of festival spirit. However, people did not remain on the streets until a late hour, most preferring to celebrate the New Year in their homes.



An authoritative person provided the information that when the New Year was ushered in, there were two people and one cat in Victoria Street.

1970

Waikato Independent, January 1970

The Police and Traffic Officers report that behaviour in Cambridge over the holiday period was quite good and there were no incidents.

Traffic was heavy but orderly. There were a number of nose to tail collisions, particularly at the roundabout but none were serious.

There have been more hitchhikers on the roads than usual this summer and it has been reported that motorists have not been generous towards them. The general appearance of so many of them has been a deterrent to their chances of thumbing a ride.





The Old School Bus Shed



*The School Bus Depot, William and Vogel Street
Detail from REG BUCKINGHAM, CM2917/3/3*

This photo taken by Reg Buckingham in 1965 is of cars lined up to watch a polo match just off Vogel Street. Historical Society member Murray Brown pointed out that the large shed in the background on the corner of William and Vogel was the school bus depot owned by Norman King. Murray remembers travelling by school bus from the Intermediate School on Clare Street to the Technical College which was next to the courthouse, now the Museum. The house in the foreground is still there today.

Additions to the collection

- Book *Cambridge Commercial Architecture – Victoria Street* by Jennie Gainsford
- Photographs, correspondence and archives of John Coles QSM
- Victorian photograph of music teacher Madame Isherwood of Cambridge
- 1950s doll with accompanying photograph of it and its young Cambridge owner.

New Friends of the Museum

We look forward to seeing **Dorothy Ann Robson, Dave Linthwaite, Bo Stapleton, Bob Russell and Keith Small** at future events. Welcome to the Cambridge Historical Society.

What's On

MONDAY 16 DECEMBER 2024, 10.30 to 11.30 am
Museum Morning Tea for Volunteers and Members
Please RSVP by Friday, 13 December.

The Society Committee and Museum team would like to show their gratitude for all the time and thought given to the museum and archive over the year. Please join us for a cuppa, cake and a chat at the museum from 10.30 am. Please RSVP to help with catering.

Coming up

FRIDAY 23 MAY 2025
Talk by Matthew Gainsford, Marine Archaeologist
10.30 am, Te Awa, 1866 Hamilton Road
Details to follow.

FRIDAY 22 AUGUST 2025
Talk by Craig Hoyle – “Excommunicated: Two centuries of complicated family history”

Craig Hoyle was born in Kirikiriroa Hamilton into the Exclusive Brethren, an isolationist sect that shuns social contact with the outside world. After facing interrogations and conversion therapy for his sexuality, Craig was excommunicated from the Brethren and lost his family in 2009.

Today he is chief news director for the Sunday Star-Times. His book, *Excommunicated*, is a multigenerational memoir tracing 200 years of his family's history, using letters, records and interviews to explore how his forebears became associated with the Brethren movement, and the subsequent impact over seven generations. Craig lives in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland.

New committee, new ideas!



We are in the process of planning events for next year. Current ideas include talks in and about commercial buildings within the Cambridge CBD; visits to Firth Tower Reserve and Museum and Tamahere Reserve. If you have suggestions you would like to share, please contact Secretary Jo Barnes at secretary.cbhs@gmail.com.

Photograph: Firthtower.co.nz

