



Welcome to our final newsletter for 2025

This year has been rewarding for the Society. The Museum has continued to evolve with new displays, more walks and talks, fresh interpretation around town and steady work behind the scenes in our archives, oral history and research projects. Nothing we do happens in isolation, and the momentum you see across our work is the result of many people caring about Cambridge's stories and wanting them preserved and shared.

New Committee



At our Annual General Meeting in November, members confirmed the Committee for the coming year:

President: Dr Stephen Schollum

Secretary: Dr Jo Barnes

Treasurer: Michael Gore

Members: Amiel Bates, Dr Bronwen Byers, Lisa Meehan, Andrew Johnstone, Philip Moon, Jane West and Kirsty Wyndham

You can learn more about each Committee member on our website. Thank you to everyone who has stepped forward, and equal thanks to those who have recently stepped back after long periods of service. The Museum runs on the generosity of its people.

The team has had a busy year. New displays, the archive audit, the new History Town Trail brochure, the start of the

School Register Project and renewed Heritage Buildings research have been milestones. Our oral history programme has continued to grow, capturing voices and memories that will increase in relevance as the years go by.

Our upcoming display, *Kitchen: Tools, Tastes and Changing Times*, opens in March. It has grown directly from the stories you shared at our last morning tea. Thank you especially to Ken Sheldrick and Jennie Gainsford for helping shape the exhibition and contributing their own memories. As you enjoy the summer, take a moment to think about your own kitchen. Who taught you to cook? Which tools were always on the bench? Which ones never quite worked the way you hoped? Every object tells a story, and many begin at home. If you have a kitchen item with a tale behind it, we'd love to hear from you. Your story could be the spark that helps someone else connect with the exhibition.

Come and visit

Remember to bring your family and friends to visit over the summer holidays. Apart from Christmas Day, we are open every day:

10am–2pm on weekends and public holidays

10am–4pm on weekdays

We are part of Waipā District Libraries' summer reading activities, so expect to see children searching for clues, ticking off checklists and discovering familiar places in new ways.

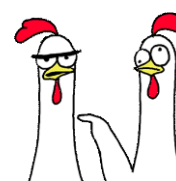
We are launching a new 45-minute walking tour between the Museum and Lake Te Kō Utu. It is designed for all ages and builds a sense of curiosity and discovery into every stop along the way. Full details follow.

A warm thank you to our wonderful team of volunteers – Bo, Gill, Harriet, Leigh, Penny, Pete and Val – and to our committee members, researchers and supporters. Visitor numbers have stayed strong this year, a direct reflection of your talent, energy and willingness to keep trying new things. You make the Museum a welcoming place.

We wish you a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Elizabeth, Karen and Kate

The worst thing about getting old is listening to the children's advice.



CM4014/31: 1970s motto book
Leamington CWI

Address for mailed copies



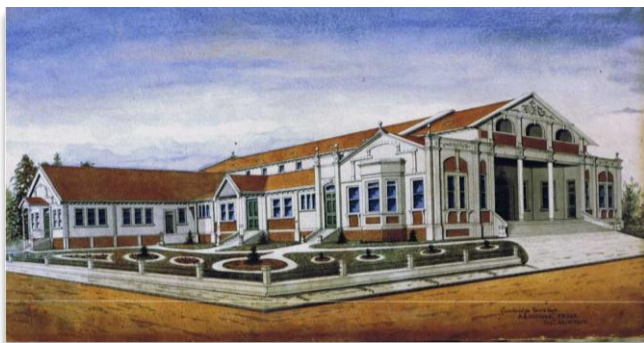


Monuments to his Foresight

**Frank (William Francis) Buckland – Cambridge Mayor
1898-1903 and 1905-1910**

Cambridge was in an uproar when it was suggested that the saleyards move from Jubilee Gardens to a site on Taylor Street. The hotels would lose money and the town would die!

But Mayor Frank Buckland was determined to have the site for his proposed Town Hall, and so the move went ahead. The hall was the last stage of his ten-year modernisation plan, and the townspeople had agreed to a £5,000 loan to cover the cost.



Herrold's design for the Cambridge Town Hall

From 14 submissions they chose architect A B Herrold's design, but the lowest tender was £194 above the agreed loan. The Council refused to pay more than £5,000, and Mayor Buckland resigned on the spot. But he returned two days later with the support he needed, and the building began.

The Cambridge Town Hall was only one of a long list of iconic buildings established during Buckland's mayoralty.

The Buckland Family

Frank Buckland's father William was from a rich family in Devonshire, whose members were quickly able to develop enterprises when emigrating to distant lands. William arrived in Auckland in 1841, learned the Māori language and began buying up Māori land in Auckland.

William bought lands in the Waikato that were granted to – and then abandoned by – militia soldiers who could not afford to develop them for farming. He also bought Māori land in the Waikato through the Native Land Court. Early settler William Moon implied in a memoir that Buckland had purchased around 90,000 acres of land.

Early life

Frank Buckland was born in Auckland in 1847. He was William and Susan's second son. He became a civil engineer, and by the age of 21 he was managing the Una Battery Mine at Thames.

He had a poetic side. In his early twenties, he published a book of poetry "Morning Rays" containing lines such as:

*Full oft I sing in changeful mood,
My dream of love, in solitude.
For Oh! I long to steal away,
And hide as 'twere from light of day,
The thoughts that through my bosom roll,
While holding converse with my soul.*

At age 23, he purchased a property from his future father-in-law and built a two-storeyed house in Remuera, now known as *Araroa* on St Vincent Avenue. He married Elizabeth Shipherd in 1869, and they had two children. As the family settled in Auckland, he became active in politics and was a member of various Boards.

In a discussion over a drink, the story goes that Frank made a bet that he could go back to university and become a lawyer in one year. He won the bet and was called to the Bar of the Auckland Supreme Court in 1884 aged 37.

Buckland was MP for Franklin North in 1884-1887 and for Manukau in 1890-1893. In the House, he became known as the "most satirical wag" who had ever sat in Parliament.

He was occasionally the butt of jokes. In October 1891, he was offered the "jawbone prize" immediately after he had finished his address at a meeting of Onehunga electors. Buckland took this in bad part, refused to accept the presentation, and said he would take an insult from no one.

In the *Catholic Times* in 1891, the "Wellington Watchman" wrote that "a most striking reason in favour of extending the parliamentary franchise to women - the first rotten egg which had been thrown at Mr Buckland during the recent election had been thrown by a girl."

Buckland gave as good as he got.

Mr Buckland as 'Talking Terror.'

Mr Buckland, who slaughtered the late Speaker at the last general election, is (says a contemporary) the talking 'terror' of Parliament. He rises on nearly every occasion and treats members to a display of florid volubility that is simply terrifying. He is not an orator, but a wordy cataract. At first his style seems objectionable if not coarse and offensive, but on closer observation a good deal of humour is found to permeate the honourable member's utterances. There is, however, one member to whom Mr Buckland's music is very distressing. This is Mr Rees, member for Auckland. Between Messrs Rees and Buckland, for certain reasons, there is no love lost. The other afternoon the quietude of the House was suddenly disturbed by the ringing voice of 'Tongariro.' 'Dear, dear,' sighed the member for Auckland in heaviness of heart, 'what an infliction!' 'Tongariro' swelled louder and louder, the lava poured forth, and the belching grew fast and furious. Then the tones grew louder, and 'he'll soon run down,' ejaculated Auckland. Just at this moment someone rose and interrupted Mr Buckland. 'Oh, heavens!' cried Auckland in despair, 'why don't you leave him alone? You'll start him afresh.'

Observer, 22 August 1891





A move to Cambridge

Buckland had varied family land holdings in the Waikato, which is why the family moved to Cambridge in around 1894. He practised as a lawyer in town and became active in politics. He built legal chambers in 1898, a building that still stands in Duke Street (pictured).



CM3164, Mr Buckland's Legal Chambers taken in 1921, when occupied by Lewis & Dallimore



CM2568/6/24:
W F Buckland, Solicitor
and Mayor

Within four years of his arrival, Buckland was elected Mayor of Cambridge. He was determined to push Cambridge into the 20th century – and so he did, but not without resistance.

The Saleyards: Buckland moved the livestock and farm equipment saleyards from the present Jubilee Gardens to a site in Taylor Street. This move aroused bitter controversy among farmers and business people alike. However,

when the Council proposed building a Town Hall on the site (at a meeting in August 1900), many residents approved.

This didn't stop Cr George Clark from suing Mayor Buckland for allegedly saying, during an altercation on the saleyards, "You are a lot of bloody scoundrels, damned dogs, I would not wipe my boots on you." (*Waikato Times* 18/8/1906)

The Water Supply: In 1903 Buckland was instrumental in establishing the Town's first water supply from Moon's Creek, together with a water tower on Hamilton Road and water reticulations to parts of the borough. This led to the founding of the Fire Brigade, and to the building of a fountain in memory of Queen Victoria at the Duke and Victoria Streets "turnaround" on the intersection of the two streets.

Street paving: Buckland's Council kerbed and channelled Duke and Victoria Streets and tar sealed two miles of business area streets.

In 1903, Frank Buckland retired from the mayoralty. He soon became dissatisfied with the slow actions of the new Mayor – particularly over the erection of a new high-level bridge over the Waikato. He stood again for election in 1905 and won by five votes.

Victoria Bridge: Buckland used his engineering knowledge to insist on the high-level bridge mounts having heavy rollers to withstand the harmonic vibrations set up by the hoofbeats of mobs of cattle and herds of sheep passing over it. He was on the committee that decided on the location and construction of the bridge. A ribbon was cut at the opening ceremony, with Elizabeth Buckland holding one end.

The Gas Works: He was 'the mayor who set the town alight' when he opened the gas works and lit up the Council Chamber for the first time in 1907.

The Post Office: The Prime Minister, Sir Joseph Ward officially opened the new Post Office, now the Alpino Restaurant, in 1908.

Sewerage System. In 1903, he developed the nucleus of a sewerage system for the business area. Halfway down the Duke Street hill, on the left, the original septic tank was in use until 1971, when a new ponding system was built. Altogether, Buckland had 6.5 miles of drainage and sewerage pipes installed.

The Technical and Manual Training School was opened in 1909 next to the **Courthouse**, which was opened the same year by the Minister of Justice, Hon. Dr Findlay.

The Cambridge Town Hall: Buckland himself laid the foundation stone in 1909. The Cambridge Museum holds the engraved silver trowel he used on the day.



CM3752: Silver trowel used by Buckland in 1909

When a new Mayor and Council were elected in 1910, their agenda was to reduce the eye-watering amount of debt at the time – £30,000 for a community of 1,400 ratepayers. However, they acknowledged that Cambridge had become "a favourite residential centre."

K Payne

References: The Bucklands of the Waikato J A C & M R Buckland; various articles searchable on Papers Past; Cambridge Town Hall photo book by Eris Parker, photographs and records from the collection of the Cambridge Museum.





The Revival of the Schools' Project

In the early years of 2000, NZ Society of Genealogists (NZSG) began a New Zealand-wide initiative to collect and copy school registers to ensure these records were saved for future generations' research. Cambridge Genealogy Group and a small team of members led by Eris Parker set out collecting and photocopying registers from as many local schools as they could. They managed to capture eleven, the earliest being Cambridge Primary School from 1880. The copies of the collected records were placed in storage at the Cambridge Museum.

NZSG has revived this project and prompted branches throughout NZ to take up the task again, giving our local Genealogy branch the nudge to get on with the job. The stored records have now been scanned and are ready for the data to be entered into worksheets. This valuable resource, once it is completed, will be a useful addition to the records held in the Cambridge Museum's collection.

For each school register, two volunteers transcribe the data into duplicate worksheets, a third person checks and makes any corrections. One corrected copy is then sent to NZSG for uploading into the School Records Collection. Currently, almost 2000 schools nationwide, dating from 1858 to the present time, have been accumulated in the NZSG collection. As there are no census records kept in New Zealand, making the transcription and collection of school registers countrywide a valuable resource for tracing a person or families.

Transcribing the records and keeping them electronically reduces the chances of losing them forever. If we look back to the fire of August 1948 at Leamington School and the loss of all school records from the time it opened as Cambridge West School in 1880, we realise the importance of the task ahead. The records we hold for this school are from 1948.

A major task lies ahead, but what an absorbing and fulfilling work to take on!

Bo Stapleton

Cambridge Genealogy Group and Museum Volunteer



Jo Barnes and Bo Stapleton – rewarding work!

Coming up this Summer

Cambridge Walking Tour



Every Tuesday & Sunday at 11 am between 6 Jan - 24 Feb 2026 Discover Cambridge histories on a 45-minute guided walking tour through the town centre. Uncover hidden stories and explore the layers of history beneath your feet. Suitable for all ages. **Beginning at the museum.**

No booking needed, but spaces are limited. For groups of 6 or more, please email admin@cambridgemuseum.org.nz.

Craft days at the Museum – 12 and 19 January

Monday, 12 January - Mini Bridge Builders inspired by the High-Level Bridge. Can you build a bridge that can support our cows?

Monday 19 January - Landscape Lanterns Create paper lanterns decorated with silhouettes of trees, horses and local landmarks.

No booking needed, but spaces are limited. For groups of 6 or more, please email admin@cambridgemuseum.org.nz.

PBA125 - Paul's Book Arcade 1901-2026

125th Anniversary

7 March 2026

Event at The Link Community Centre, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 4 Te Aroha St, Hamilton East, 10am to 4.30pm



A celebration of the iconic Hamilton and Auckland bookshops, William Paul, and Blackwood & Janet Paul publishing. For staff, customers, friends, published authors and artists, and anyone with personal connections or memories, as well as researchers, historians and architects.

Pre-paid \$50 registrations are required from November 2025 until 7 February 2026.

www.facebook.com/groups/1135502001961464 (Paul's Book Arcade - 125 years)

paulsbookarcade125anniversary@gmail.com

Phone 07-855-8428 Jeff Downs

New additions to the collection:

- Bookcase with the full Encyclopaedia Britannica (1903) 9th Edition, owned by the McNaughton family of Cambridge
- Photograph, BSA motorcycles outside D L Hastie, Priestley Building, Cambridge, donated by Neville Olsen
- Cambridge Transport Co Minute Books x2 and framed receipt, donated by Jim Sullivan
- Gloves 1920s x3, donated by Carl MacDonald
- *Cambridge Edition*: final copy

