

PORIRUA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION (Inc)

February 2014 Newsletter

NEXT ACTIVITY:

NOTICE OF AGM - 7.30pm Tuesday 25th February 2014

The AGM of the Porirua Historic Association will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 25th February 2014, in the No 1 Meeting Room, Te Raupraha Arena, Porirua.

After the AGM Bob Cater will talk on history of the USA Marines Hall in Titahi Bay and progress to date on plans for its restoration.

All welcome - Membership enquiries to June Penman, Phone 236 7438

CO M I N G ACTIVITIES

Monday 3rd March at 1.00 pm: The Mana U3A has organised an afternoon bus tour of historic sites around Porirua. It will leave from Pataka and Linda Fordyce is the commentator. For those who want to join this tour, contact Brian Mosen 233 0709 or brianmosen@xtra.co.nz.

It has been proposed that if there is enough support, that our Association organises a day out in Otaki to visit their museum and some of the historic sites in the area, as well as, maybe 5 minutes shopping. This will be discussed at the AGM.

Winter Speakers

As the Sunday afternoon talk proved to be well supported last year, the Porirua Historical Association is planning a series of talks this year in conjunction with The Friends of Pataka, to be held in the Helen Smith Community Room at Pataka Museum. Our talks, from 3.30 pm to 5.00 pm, will follow a music presentation by the Friends,

The talks will start on Sunday the 6th July with Peter Clayworth's presentation on the 1913 Strike (civil war) in Wellington. We missed out on commemorating the Great Strike last year but better late than never. We are also thinking about a speaker on the Waikato Wars (150 years ago) and the First World War in August.

President: Tony Cross – 232 7593 **Sec/Vice President:** Brian Mosen 2330709
Treasurer June Penman

Committee: Margaret Blair; Liz Evans; Gael McRoberts; Alistair Robb

NZ Wars

Many historical Associations, including our own, will this year be reflecting on the impact of the First World War, (the war to end all wars). However, just as our generation learned more about English history than our own, not much has been said lately about the conflict that occurred in our own country 150 years ago. The impact of Governor Grey's controversial decision to build a military road into the Waikato is still being resolved today.

We now understand that the war was started as a means to get access to land and unlike Gore Brown, the previous Governor, Grey had the troops to do it. By February 1864 the British forces had reached the Kīngitanga agricultural base at Rangiaowhia, near Te Awamutu. On the way they outflanked formidable modern pā at Meremere and Pāterangi and captured an equally formidable but undermanned pā at Rangiriri. The defeat at Ōrākau – 'Rewi's last stand' – in April 1864 brought the Waikato war to an end. (Ref. *The NZ Wars Major M R Wicksteed, RNZA*)

The First World War

This is the year that we commemorate the war that saw one hundred thousand young kiwis go off to fight in a European conflict, after some initial introduction to hostilities in Egypt and Turkey. Eighteen thousand were killed- a death rate of nearly one in five.

Even after all we see on the "History Channel" it is still difficult to get ones head around just what an impact this war had on New Zealand citizens. That is until you read Ray Grover's book, "March to the Sound of Guns". Ray, who wrote "Cork of War" in 1982, (NZ in the 1830's and 40's), details the lives of five people, all of them nineteen, except for Colonel Malone of the Wellington Regiment. He has done this after 20 years of research into soldier's diaries, letters and memoirs along with actual inspections of the battlefields.

As well as describing their lives as soldiers and one nurse, he provides an insight into life in New Zealand before and after the war. The chapter on the 1913 Great Strike as described by one of the future army volunteers is riveting e.g. "Next morning there they were a mob on horse back. That's how they came in, that's how they went, about it, and how they left. We'd heard they were coming and were waiting. Their batons like fence posts except that they were of hardwood and a handier length for belting people". *The "March to the Sound of Guns" was published in 2008*

Just Another Thought

If Scotland votes to "go it alone" and separates from England, the Union Jack will have to be changed. This will mean a change to the New Zealand flag, an opportune time to have (design) its own flag and get away from confusion with the Aussies.

Did you know

Early in the reign of Charles I, pirates from the Barbary Coast of North Africa raided Devon, Cornwall and Southern Island. Boys and girls were carried off to be sold as slaves. In our history lessons we learnt about the scourge of the Vikings but raids from Africa are all new information. When you think about the world today and terrorists in London – nothing has really changed over the centuries