

DEVONPORT HISTORICAL & MUSEUM SOCIETY



March 2012 NEWSLETTER

AGM:

**The Museum's AGM will be held at the Museum Sunday 15th April at 3pm.
Eddie De Heer from the Devonport Business Association will be our speaker.**

From the President Alastair Fletcher.

I am often reminded of the thoughts of a Maori Chief about 150 years ago. He asked, "What is the most important thing?" and he continued, "...it is people."

Devonport Museum is about local people and their stories. It works because of local people, and more and more it is visited and supported by local people. Many overseas visitors and others from around New Zealand appreciate what has been achieved by volunteers, and with the support of our part time curator, Celia. Thank you all, and long may it continue to be a local success. The wonderful time shared by many at the culmination of the Community Treasure Hunt on 4th of March highlighted the success of what is being done by you all.

We have achieved "Resource Consent" for the planned extension at the rear of the Museum, and the very necessary re-cladding of that wall. We continue the process by seeking further funding, and applying for a building permit. We are working closely with the Auckland Council Planners, Heritage and Parks sections to complete this project. This will give us much needed extra display space and some archive space too. Most importantly, it will weatherproof the rear wall for the future. We are also making the old coal office shed watertight by reroofing in the near future. This will improve our storage situation.

The focus for our March Committee meeting is a review of the layout of the Museum displays. Following the wonderful contribution of surplus display cases from the old Spring St Navy Museum, and a consultation with Otago Settlers Museum exhibition designer Tim Cornelius, we are working to make our displays more logical and accessible. An overall plan is the first step, and then we will gradually reorganise and upgrade each section. The new space will eventually add to this renewal!

Thanks to members and the community for support. Remember that we depend on you to identify material in the community which supports our preservation role, and helps to tell local stories. Photos and documents welcome, along with the accompanying stories!

Curator's Report:**Sister Susie's Shirt**

A mystery concerning the purpose of an object in our collection was cleared up recently, when I noticed a very similar item on Antiques Road show. The object is a child-sized shirt, sewn into a bag, with Sister Susie's Shirt embroidered on the front. Apparently these items were sent to soldiers on the front lines in World War One, and were primarily used for storing dirty socks, and often had a needle and thread in the pocket for mending. A song was written about them at the time (this can be listed to on YouTube). Although we know when the shirt came into our collection, we don't have a record of the donor – if anyone knows who it came from we would love to know, so that we can possibly link it to the soldier it was made for.

Other news:

Over the summer I have been catching up on the backlog of objects and photographs needing cataloguing, focusing on photographs of the Devonport ferries, and items from various Devonport chemists (including getting Linda Withy to identify some of the more alarming contents of various jars of pills and potions – fortunately most of the dodgy pill jars were empty). I have also been packing up more of the costumes and other textiles, in the lovely new acid-free boxes we received through a Helping Hands grant from Te Papa.

We are starting to populate the new display cases with collection items – so far a case of material relating to the Devonport Steam Ferry Company is on display, and we have filled one of the sets of drawers with needlework, embroidery and other sewing material. We are in the process of formally planning where all these cases will go, and how other collection items will be displayed.

Pictures from the Treasure Hunt run by the Community Coordinator

Children who won prizes



Allister Campbell showing children the volcano erupting.



Devonport Museum

Open Saturday 2 – 4 pm.

Sunday 2 – 4pm

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<http://www.devonportmuseum.org.nz>



Celia Walker's family enjoying the sausage sizzle after their Treasure Hunt.

We would like to know if any member has recently changed their e-mail address or any other members who have now got an e-mail address to make sending out the newsletter easier.

Please send to us at the Museum.

info@devonportmuseum.org.nz

We look forward to seeing you all at the AGM Sunday 15th April 3pm

Help with afternoon tea would be appreciated.