

# Mt Victoria Historical Society News

No. 13, May 2000



*For information contact:*

*Joanna Newman on 385 2254 (hm)*

*Ross McFarlane on 384 4388 (hm)*

## **June – Heritage Month in the Wellington Region** Immigration and the People

**Sunday, June 18 at 2.00 pm in Crossways - *The Greek Community in Mt Victoria***

Many of us know that there is a Hania Street in Mt Victoria and that there are many families of Greek origin living in our suburb.

We have arranged for a member of the Greek Community in Mt Victoria to come and tell us more about their coming to New Zealand – why they came, why they chose to live in Mt Victoria, their experiences in arriving and making a life here.

### **The Greek connection in Mount Victoria**

There are strong Greek and Cretan communities in Wellington, one of which is centred on Mt Victoria. Hania Street is named after the old capital of Crete and the city with which Wellington is twinned in a sister city relationship. The street was created in 1990 when Lloyd and Nelson Streets were connected in the middle and renamed. Appropriately, it is the street on which the Greek Orthodox Church is located.

The Sister City Charter between Wellington and Hania was signed on May 19, 1984 in Hania to celebrate the contribution of the Greek and Cretan communities to Wellington and the strong links and special friendships formed since World War II. An olive tree was planted beside the Michael Fowler Centre to mark the occasion but this has now been moved to the Greek/New Zealand memorial site between Kent and Cambridge Terraces on the border of Mt Victoria. In 1990, the two cities 'exchanged' street names to mark the New Zealand army's part in the Battle of Crete in 1941. Wellington celebrates *Hania Day* on May 21, which is also when commemorations for the Battle of Crete take place.

Turn over for more information about the Battle of Crete and its significance in the relationship between the Greek/Cretan community and New Zealand.

### **What we have planned for the year**

After the huge success of our last meeting on renovations, we are planning another one end of October/early November with new and interesting angles.

The Committee is also working on completing the Mt Victoria walking guide this year. It will contain more fascinating facts about the history of the suburb, which you'll be able to imagine as you walk around yourself or with visitors. If you have interesting information about the history of the area from about Marjoribanks St to the Mount Vic. tunnel – for instance about businesses, hospitals, schools, people or events, or if you have old photographs, please contact Jo Newman.

And on that theme, we would love help with research (sometimes for an identified project, but also if you have a particular interest yourself) so please contact us if you are interested in this.

### **No. 21 Shannon Street**

One of the projects we have been working on recently is researching the history behind 21 Shannon St. There is currently a proposal to demolish this and construct a huge two-unit development on the site, totally out of keeping with the area. Shannon St is in the Northern Mt Victoria special character area, as defined by the recently approved Variation 14, so we are concerned about such developments in the area. If you also are concerned, please contact us or the Mt Victoria Residents Ass. for more information.

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