



MT VICTORIA

Historical Society News

For more information contact:

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Art Deco Mt Victoria

Sunday, March 21 at 2.00 pm
Meeting at the Queen Victoria statue on Kent Terrace

Join Joanna Newman for a tour of the Art Deco architecture and 1930's history of Mt Victoria – and come dressed in 1920's or 1930's costume to add to the atmosphere and fun!

The walk will end at Crossways Community Centre in Elizabeth Street.

If weather forces a postponement, the walk will take place a week later on March 28. Phone Joanna Newman on 385 2254 if you feel you need confirmation.

**Stepping
Out!**
steppingout.feelinggreat.co.nz

Programme

For the first event of the year, we have worked with Wellington City Council to be part of their month encouraging walking in Wellington. We hope the extra advertising will mean new people discover the unique nature of Mt Vic! Get a copy of the Stepping Out brochure for lots more great walks throughout March.



The next event to put in your diary is:

Tour of Central Wellington Maori Historical Sites

A special opportunity to learn about the pre-1840 landscape of the inner harbour of Wellington.

The society is organising a bus tour on Sunday May 23, departing from Crossways at 1.30 p.m. and returning at 4.30 p.m. Our guide will be Neville Gilmore, who has been researching Maori Wellington since 1987, and whose work has contributed strongly to the substantial claim lodged with the Waitangi Tribunal by the Wellington Tenth Trust in May 2003. The tour will include sites of historical significance for Maori such as Wilton Bush, Pipitea marae, Kaiwharawhara, the (largely buried) Onepoto stream, the Waitangi lagoon (Chaffers' Park), Te Aro, Mt Cook and slopes of Mt Victoria. Members of the Mt Victoria Historical Society get the first opportunity to book for this tour, before it is more widely advertised (if additional numbers are needed).

Make an early booking before March 20 - let tour organiser, Richard Norman, know at Richard.Norman@vuw.ac.nz or mail to 1 Stafford St, Mt Victoria. For members of the Mt Victoria Historical Society, the charge for the tour is just \$10.00, with a charge of \$20.00 for non-members.

Other Historical Societies will be invited to join in the tour after March 20 if the bus is not already fully booked by then.

More Historical Walking Opportunities

Have you done the Historic Te Aro Heritage tour yet? These take place on Sundays at 1.00pm. For more information contact Natasha Naus on 801 5147 (natasha.naus@paradise.net.nz) or Alison Scott on 471 1225.

Pirie Street Reserve

Research for this Historical Note started out as a search for information about grazing horses on Mt Victoria and particularly on Pirie Street Reserve. I was distracted in my search, however, by other interesting information I discovered about Pirie Street Reserve, so horses will have to wait for another day! The park has long been used for recreation purposes so this article will talk about some of those of the last 70 or so years.

While it has been used for recreation for many years, for some time the playing of games on Council-owned land was prohibited on Sundays. This restriction was apparently not always observed, however, to the dismay of some locals. In 1929, an A Joynt wrote to the Mayor:

Dear Mr Mayor,

At the Pirie Street playing ground there is a notice stating the playing of games on Sunday is prohibited. Up to within a few weeks ago this has been fairly well observed, but during the last few Sundays, in the mornings, football is in full swing up to noon. Of course, there is perhaps nothing in the kicking of a ball around the ground, but when the players get into "scrums" and "rushes", the excitement grows, and with it a torrent of blasphemy and filthy remarks which, on a quiet morning can be heard all over the neighbourhood, so that one can not sit in one's garden without one's ears being assailed with the verbal muck. May I respectfully request that better supervision be given so that this annoyance will cease. On no other ground, over which the Council has jurisdiction, can playing be seen on Sundays, so why this one?

The area started to see more organised use for recreation with the construction of a pavilion for the Mt Victoria Croquet Club in 1930. Then, in 1931, a playing area of about 2 acres was proposed by The Education Board of the District of Wellington for the proposed new Clyde Quay School. Work for this was carried out under the Unemployment Scheme No. 5.

It continued to be booked by many groups for events, however, from Girl Guides to Indian sports clubs. One of the more interesting ones was a booking by the Friends of the Soviet Union in 1935. Miss LM Puckridge of the Friends sent the programme for the day to the Council along with her request for a permit to use the reserve:

Dear Sir,

The following is a programme for the Children's Fete we propose to hold in Pirie St Reserve on Sat. Nov. 9th

1.30 Races, including sack, egg and spoon, skipping races

2.0 Baby Show

3.0 Competitions in character and Highland dancing

Performing dogs

Bran-tub

Conjuror

Fortune-teller

Ice cream and soft drink stall

Punch and Judy

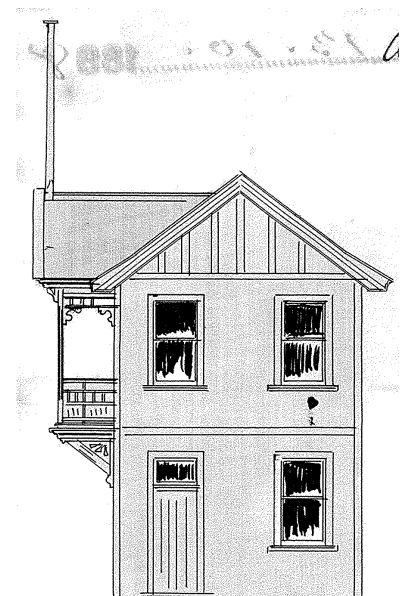
Please will you grant us a permit for the use of the Reserve. I enclose 5/-.

Can anyone tell us what a "bran-tub" was?

In 1955, croquet gave way to bowling and the Council approved land for the development of bowling greens for the Victoria Bowling Club and the Victoria Women's Bowling Club.

The Victoria Bowling Club had been established in 1896 by Messrs WL Meek, DT Stuart and BM Molineaux, with eight rinks in Claremont Grove, off Austin Street. It started with 60 members and by 1906 it had 120. Presidents in the first 10 years included prominent early Mt Victoria identities (some of whom we've already written about and others we'll cover in future) such as DT Stuart, RC Hamerton, Francis Penty, F Townsend and J Mackay.

The Club's first pavilion was built in 1898 and the original plans (part of which is shown here to the right) give a good idea of its style, although it was twice added to in those first 10 years.



END ELEVATION