



MT VICTORIA

Historical Society News

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Notice of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY

Sunday, September 12 at 2.00 pm, Crossways

The Annual General Meeting will be followed by a talk from:

***Michael Kelly, Heritage Consultant
On Serious about Heritage***

AGM

Nominations for positions on the committee may be made in writing up to The Secretary, Mt Victoria Historical Society, c/o 20 Porritt Avenue, Mt Victoria and should be received by Thursday September 9. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor on the day of the meeting. We would love to have new committee members, so please don't hesitate to put your name forward.

Mt Victoria Lookout

The Mt Victoria Historical Society (among other particularly interested parties) has been consulted at regular intervals by Wellington City Council about the plans for upgrading the Mt Vic lookout. The proposed concept is about to go out for wider consultation, with funding being sought for the 2005/6 year. The revamp will include interpretation about the history of the area, which will make it much more interesting for visitors and locals.

With that in mind, this Historical Note is devoted to some history about the top of the hill which is so much part of our lives.

Clyde Quay School Fair

The committee is planning to have a 'stand' at the Clyde Quay School Fair later this year to promote the Historical Society and the heritage of Mt Victoria. One of the great attractions will be committee member, Jim Harper, with his wonderful German street organ to entertain the crowds. If you'd like to help, please let us know.

Mt Victoria Lookout and Alexandra Road 1920's and 30's

The construction of Alexandra Road



Construction of Alexandra Road on Mt Victoria in 1930 [Wellington City Archives 00138:0:1507 and 00138:0:1508]

The Centennial memorial and lookout

The Centennial lookout was designed by Gray Young, Morton & Young in 1939

In 1939, plans were made to build a lookout and memorial on the top of Mt Victoria, as part of the city's centennial memorials and celebrations works for the 1940 NZ Centennial. It included a bronze orientation table, bronze heads of Wellington and Wakefield. The stone and concrete lookout was constructed by Fletcher Construction. It was officially opened on March 15, 1940.

The commemorative plaque records that it was: "Erected as a Centennial Memorial, September 1939. Commemorates the founding of the city by settlers organised by the New Zealand Company. The first actors in the drama arrived in Wellington Harbour in the "Tory" from England on September 20th 1839. Edward Gibbon Wakefield was the moving spirit behind the organisation. The City took the name of Wellington from the Great Duke who assisted the passage of Wakefield's colonizing legislation through the English Parliament. The granite wall of the Look-Out is the gift of the London County Council and formed part of the Waterloo Bridge, London, which was opened by the Duke of Wellington in 1817 and demolished 1938."

Depression employment projects

During the Depression of late 1920's and 30's, relief workers were given a considerable amount of work around Mt Victoria. Workers were paid 12 shillings a day.

Pirie Street Reserve was created by unemployed workers under the Mayor's Employment Fund in 1927.

In 1928, after gorse grubbing, 100,000 trees were planted on the Town Belt, including Mt Victoria.



Mt Victoria Lookout, circa 1935 [Wellington City Archives 00155:0:51]