

# Mt Victoria Historical Society Inc

[www.mvhs.wellington.net.nz](http://www.mvhs.wellington.net.nz)

## ANNUAL REPORT 2011

The past year was another busy one for the committee, although we were not able to arrange the usual four events that we aim to hold every year. Following our annual general meeting in October, John Sullivan, photographic curator at the Alexander Turnbull Library presented a very interesting talk on Wellington photographers.

We put a great deal of effort into our stand at the Mt Victoria Street Fair in February, however, to attract even more interest than last year. We had a Victorian parlour game for children to play; a ‘guess-what-the-Victorian-object-is’ game based on a raisin de-seeder generously donated to us by member, Jim Harper; and a “guess-the-number of sweets in the jar” competition. We also offered two guided walks for the public, one on Art Deco Mt Victoria and the other Northern Mt Victoria. A number of new members joined on the day.

### Newsletters

As usual, four newsletters were produced and delivered to members over the year. They included Historical Notes on the Mouat and Harper families, on Captain Renner, Charles Wycherly and Lipman Levy. Two were written by members and one relied on a great deal of information shared by another, which is fantastic. I encourage others to research and share history through the newsletter if they find items of interest.

### Heritage under threat

A number of committee members have spent a lot of time over the past year trying to raise awareness of important heritage in Mt Victoria and round the nearby Basin Reserve and ensure its protection.

The NZ Transport Authority’s (NZTA) plans for a flyover beside the Basin Reserve and a second Mt Victoria Tunnel threaten Mother Aubert’s Home of Compassion crèche, all the houses in Paterson St, including the very-significant, 1869 Waring Taylor house, destroying the ambience of the Basin Reserve. The plans also threaten many other houses in southern Mt Victoria and will increase traffic in narrow streets such as Brougham St and Porritt Avenue considerably. Members of the committee had done a considerable amount of research and work on this issue by the time NZTA opened its public ‘consultation’ period on July 4.

### Website

Over the past year we have enhanced the functionality of our website further, improving the way our photo gallery displays, and content has been continually added. Again, we particularly thank Stanley Wing, who has donated a significant amount of time to working with us on design and on implementing the technical changes, and Owen Watson, who updates content for us.

## Embassy panel

Wellington City Council offered MVHS the opportunity to use one of the large display panels on the side of the Embassy Theatre for information about the heritage of Mt Victoria. This was a condition of the resource consent for the upgrade of the Embassy Theatre but it has taken about six years to become a reality. We're now working on the content, funding, design and production of this panel. The committee will commit \$5,000 of the Society's funds to this project as we believe it will promote Mt Victoria heritage and provide an important resource to visitors and tourists as well as locals, so it is important to do it well. Any additional funds required will come from sponsorship or grants, as Wellington City Council do not contribute to its production.

## Other

We had a very slight drop in number of members over the year, from 85 to 82 but this included 11 new members. Twenty-one of these people have been members since 1996 when the Society was founded.

We now distribute the majority of our newsletters and communications via email, except where members do not have internet connections. The advantage to members is that newsletters and other communications are received more quickly and if they include colour images they can viewed in colour. For the Society, it also saves a little money and delivery time.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to particularly thank the committee of the past year – Judy Southworth, Natasha Naus, David McCrone, Trevor Bleakley, David Lee and Sue Watt - for all their hard work in many and varied ways. Thank you also to members for your support and we look forward to your continued involvement and support.

Joanna M.A. Newman  
Convenor  
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