



MT VICTORIA

Historical Society News

For more information contact:

Joanna Newman on 385 2254 (hm)

Alan Olliver on 385 1022 (hm)

Mt Victoria's Cordial Relationships

Sunday, July 25
2.00 pm
Crossways

Come and hear Peter Fisher, author of *Capital Thirst*, and Mandy Edmundson talk about the local soft drink and cordial makers and the connections of those early business people - like Annie Coad of Lorne Street and Thompson and Lewis in Tory St - with our area.

Soft drinks were big business in Victorian times. Strike and Fairlie in Lorne Street, for example, had up to 1 million bottles in circulation in the 1880s. The early soft drink industry also had wider significance because of its links with the temperance movement and with health and medicinal fads.

Peter and Mandy will also be showing and describing some of the beautiful glass and earthenware bottles that were produced in earlier times. They will explain some puzzles - such as why some bottles were made so that they could not stand upright, and others were made with a marble inside.



Both Mandy and Peter are members of the Wellington Antique Bottle and Collectables Club.

Peter Fisher will also have his book "Capital Thirst" on display. This is the definitive book about the makers of soft drinks and it illustrates the bottles used.

Finally - in the spirit of the Antiques Road Show - you are invited to bring along any antique bottles you may have for identification.

September 12 - AGM

Also to put in your calendar: our AGM will be held on Sunday afternoon, September 12 at Crossways. We have Michael Kelly of the group "Serious about Heritage" scheduled to talk to us again. And he promises to be there and to have lots to tell us!

Wakefield Memorial on the Basin Reserve

In May, the Committee prepared a submission on behalf of MVHS regarding Wellington City Council's annual plan project to restore and possibly move the Wakefield memorial on the tunnel side of the Basin Reserve. We strongly supported its restoration (including putting back the original drinking fountain) but recommended that it not be moved unless it could retain its close association with the Basin. If its current location can't be enhanced, we felt it should only be moved to another spot within the Basin Reserve or close by (for instance, between Kent and Cambridge Terraces near the Reserve).

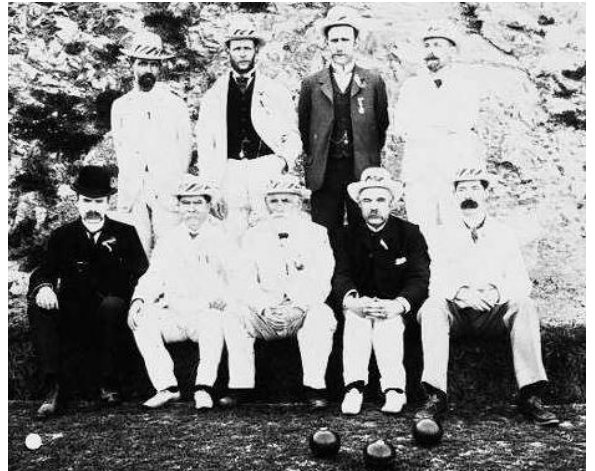
Our reasons for requesting this are that the monument was originally proposed to be sited in the Basin Reserve, which was to be drained and planted for recreation purposes, because it was "overlooking the pleasure ground which [William Wakefield] himself designed for a dock". It was erected inside the Reserve in 1882. When the boundaries of the Basin Reserve were altered in 1917, although the monument was placed outside the Reserve in its current location in Dufferin Street, it retained its close association with it (in fact, being in almost the same geographical spot).

Founders and First Presidents of The Victoria Bowling Club

Est. 1896

This Historical Note brings you some more information about the Founders of the Victoria Bowling Club, as promised. Reading about these worthy early Wellington citizens and Mt Victoria residents, one can also imagine how a number of them might have encountered each other round Claremont Grove and the northern end of Austin Street, stopped for a neighbourly chat and sooner or later got round to discussing their mutual interest in bowling. And what could be more perfect than to have a bowling club literally in their back yard, as it first was in Claremont Grove.

Robert Chisenhall Hamerton was clearly a driving force behind the establishment of bowling in Wellington, if his photo with the founding directors of the Kelburn Club is added to what we know of him as a founder of the Victoria Bowling Club. He was born in Lancashire and in 1854 his family embarked for New Zealand on board the “Cashmere”. They arrived in New Plymouth and Robert’s father, a solicitor, bought land for farming in the Taranaki district. During the “native troubles” in Taranaki Hamerton held commissions as an ensign, lieutenant then captain in the militia and volunteers and was in several engagements and awarded the New Zealand War medal. At the Waireka fight he was wounded in the knee. After the war he went into a merchant’s office for a few months, then entered the Civil Service as a clerk in the sub-Treasury. He was soon promoted and for some time held the positions of Registrar of Deeds, Joint Stock Companies, Births, Deaths and Marriages and Deputy Commissioner of Stamps at New Plymouth. On the passing of the Land Transfer Act in 1870, the government decided that only solicitors should hold positions as District Land Registrars but because Hamerton had not been admitted to the bar he transferred to the position of Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court in Wellington in 1871.



Hamerton, front row centre, with the original directors of the Kelburn Bowling Club in 1903. [Wellington City Archives]

He was also appointed Secretary for Stamps and Controller of Legacy Duties. As well as performing the duties attached to these important positions, he studied for the law and was admitted a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court in 1878. In 1880 he was appointed Public Trustee and continued as Secretary for Stamps until 1881. He held the Public Trustee position until 1891, when he retired on a pension secured by special act of Parliament.

Hamerton took great interest in Freemasonry, and was one who “bore the burden and heat of the day” in connection with the establishment of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand. He was a prominent member of St Mark’s Church and was a churchwarden and vestryman for many years. He largely assisted in the procurement of the organ erected in the church in 1879 and worked with others to promote its renovation and enlargement in the 1890’s. He was a senior partner in the legal firm of Hamerton and Andrew.

Walter L Meek lived at 6 Austin Street in 1897 (and in 1900 was building at 10 Claremont Grove). He was proprietor of Storer, Meek and Co in Featherston Street, which he established in partnership with Storer in 1887. (Storer died in 1890) The firm were direct importers of stationery, papers, printers’ inks, fancy goods, ammunition, guns, fishing tackle etc. and held a number of valuable agencies. Its trade extended throughout the colony and Meek personally visited his customers as much as possible. Meek was born in Wellington and educated at Wellington College and had been involved in a number of businesses before Storer, Meek and Co.

David Thomson Stuart’s home was in Claremont Grove. He came from Scotland on the “Rakaia” in 1867 and established himself in business in Wellington as Accountant, Agent for Absentees and Sharebroker in 1879. He had been “brought up to” banking in Scotland and then held positions in banks in London and India before coming to New Zealand. He was also one of the Commissioners of the Wellington Harbour Board Sinking Funds, a member of the Council of the Academy of Arts was a founder and the first president of the Institute of Accountants of New Zealand. In 1897 he was publishing a monthly Investor’s Guide.

Boulton Merlin Molineaux was an Englishman by birth, who came to the colonies early in his life and was educated in Sydney. He joined the Bank of New South Wales in Australia, then came to New Zealand to be manager of the Wellington Branch in 1891. In 1894 he was offered the position of Government Auditor to the Bank of New Zealand, but declined it because he didn’t want to leave the BNSW.

John MacKay was born in 1851 in Fifeshire. He came to New Zealand with his parents at the age of seven and lived in Dunedin until 1896. His first job was in a newspaper office but he started his own printing business in 1871. He moved to Wellington in 1896, the year the Victoria Bowling Club was established, to take up the position of Government Printer and lived at 21 Kent Terrace.

F Townsend – Frederick Townsend was a partner in the business of Townsend and Paul, Fruit and Produce Salesmen, established in 1886. They had auction rooms in Willis Street and a fruit and horse market in Harris Street.