

## **Mt Victoria Historical Society Inc**

### **ANNUAL REPORT**

2016-17

Over the last year, the Mt Victoria Historical Society committee has continued to deliver on the Society's key aims.

Our activities and achievements during the period since the AGM held in October 2016 are set out below. The committee met four times to organise activities, and discuss other matters.

#### **Newsletters**

We have produced two newsletters since the last AGM.

The April newsletter featured a story about an Atkins family reunion at Ettrick Cottage by David McCrone. The family had also invited Historical Society members to attend part of the celebrations, and about ten of us enjoyed meeting the family and hearing some of their stories. The newsletter also had information from Heritage New Zealand's seminar on researching your heritage house, and on the new Wellington City Recollect website.

The main article in the July newsletter was on the history of the Basin Reserve's Museum Stand by Sue Watt. The Stand is part of the Basin Reserve historic area listed under the Historic Places Act, but its future is in jeopardy. Although the Mayor had indicated consultation on its future would start in August, we have not yet heard anything.

#### **Providing information to the public**

Over the year we have responded to a number of queries about historical information, from journalists and researchers, and citizens concerned about threats to heritage buildings in the neighbourhood.

We have also maintained the Mt Victoria Historical Society website, and an associated Facebook page.

#### **Events**

We hosted two events over the year.

In April, Sister Josephine Gorman spoke to us about the life and work of Mother Suzanne Aubert.

In August, we co-hosted, along with the Mt Victoria Residents' Association, a presentation by historian Michael Kelly on the Mt Victoria Heritage Survey he had recently completed with the assistance of some of his students. We thank the Wellington City Council for funding the survey, and Vanessa Tanner, the Council's Senior Heritage Advisor, for her input. Michael and Vanessa are exploring ways of making the information widely available, and asking for suggestions.

#### **Heritage advocacy**

A recurring theme of the year was the number of concerns raised by local residents about demolitions and alterations of heritage houses in Mt Victoria which were not publicly notified, or not otherwise subject to adequate public consultation. We provided assistance when we had relevant information – our thanks to Jo Newman with this. We understand the

Residents' Association is also concerned about this, and is pursuing it with the Council's Chief Planner.

We look forward to our advocacy being further strengthened now that Michael Kelly's valuable work on the Mt Victoria heritage survey is close to public release.

We continue to be involved in plans for transport improvements from Ngauranga Gorge to the airport. In November, David and Sue met with Barry Mein, the new Project Manager of Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM) to advocate for heritage considerations in its planning. In March, Sue took part in a LGWM workshop for interested groups to discuss improvement options. MVHS is particularly interested because of possible impacts on our neighbourhood heritage (especially Paterson St), and changes in the whole area of national heritage significance from Pukeahu, through the Basin Reserve and to Government House. Lets Get Wellington Moving is planning further consultations in November.

### **Membership**

Currently, we have 70 members, which is less than the 87 members we had at the end of June last year. Is this cause for concern? We look forward to increasing our profile over the coming year and attracting more members.

### **Conclusion**

Many thanks to the committee of the past year for all their work: Sue Watt (co-convenor, treasurer), Jane O'Loughlin (co-convenor, secretary), David McCrone, and Barry Chisholm. Also thanks to David Lee, who has arranged regular cleaning of the historical display panels on the wall of the Embassy building.

Thank you also to our members for your support. We hope you feel you have received value and enjoyment from your subscriptions and we look forward to your continued involvement.

Jane O'Loughlin and Sue Watt  
Convenors

17 September 2017