



Mt VICTORIA

Historical Society News

For more information contact:
Joanna Newman on 385 2254 (hm)
www.mtvictoria.history.org

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25th Anniversary Celebration Mt Victoria Historical Society

Join us to celebrate – in Roaring 20s style
at the Black Sparrow in the 1924 Embassy Theatre

Saturday July 24, 7pm till late

Live music from the fabulous band *City Jazz*

Come dressed in your finest 1920s outfit- prizes for best dressed!

Canapés and cake – cash bar, including special mulled wine

Tickets: \$20 for members, \$50 for nonmembers (with option of 1 year's free membership)

Priority to members (and friends). Email jnewman@xtra.co.nz by July 2 to be sure of tickets and for enquiries.

P.S. We'd love you to come in 1920s outfits, but it's not mandatory, so if it's not your thing, don't let that put you off. And come and hear one of our own founding members, Richard Norman, in the jazz band!

Town Belt heritage panel installation

After about two years of discussions, research and to-and-fro with the Council, we seem to be about 6-8 weeks away from installation of the first of our heritage panels. This celebrates what to most others (i.e. those who haven't had the opportunity to read the story in a MVHS newsletter) will be a little-known story. That's the story of the secret radar research station that was based on the top of Mt Vic during World War II. We'll make sure there's a small unveiling when it's in the ground, and we'll let you know so you can join us to mark the occasion.

Spatial Plan and District Plan

The final Spatial Plan goes to the vote in Council on Friday June 24. You can rest assured that we have been working hard to get what we need to protect the heritage of Mt Vic, right up to the last minute. Since the work on the alternative plan for Mt Vic, we have been refining the message and lobbying councillors to try and get the best possible outcome. The final plan is not looking good, though, with character precincts slightly enlarged but absolutely no protection outside those and 6-storey buildings 'enabled'. Here's a link to the Council Committee paper and Plan: <https://wellington.govt.nz/-/media/your-council/meetings/committees/puororo-aamua---planning-and-environment-committee/2021-06-24-agenda-pa-pec.pdf>

After the vote, we'll be moving to focus on the District Plan which will endeavour to turn the Spatial Plan into rules for managing development (among other aspects of the city's environment).

One component of the District Plan is the heritage list of buildings and we will have the opportunity of submitting proposals for additions. While we believe all the buildings currently on the list, and the new Council proposals, should be on it, there's a certain amount of randomness to the Council's inclusions.

Here is what's currently on the list for Mt Victoria, and the first thing will be to ensure that they remain:

62 Austin Street
 Wellington East Girls' College façade, Austin Street
 46 Brougham Street (former Crossways)
 105 Brougham Street
 68-72 Elizabeth Street
 21 Hania Street (former Rehabilitation League)
 St Gerard's Church and monastery, Hawker Street
 BATS Theatre, Kent Terrace
 Embassy Theatre, Kent Terrace
 Sir James Elliot's house, 43 Kent Terrace
 Belvedere flats, Majoribanks, cnr Austin
 45-47 Majoribanks Street
 61 Majorianks Street
 62 Majorianks Street
 7 Moncrieff Street (Friends meeting house)
 19 Paterson Street (Ettrick Cottage)
 6 Prince Way
 30 Roxburgh Street
 46 Roxburgh Street
 6 Stafford Street
 (There are also other items on the list such as the Hataitai Tunnel and Queen Vic statue.)

And these are the Council's proposed additions for the revised District Plan:

20 Austin Street
 67 Austin Street
 89 Austin Street
 140 Austin Street
 23 Brougham Street - Alternative: 23 Pat Lawlor Close
 64 Brougham Street
 70 Brougham Street
 71 Brougham Street
 87 Brougham Street
 89 Brougham Street
 91 Brougham Street
 111 Brougham Street
 53 Ellice Street
 64 Majoribanks Street
 56 Pirie Street
 1 Queen Street

Our initial thoughts about new buildings for inclusion are below and we're keen to hear your thoughts on these (and/or the above):

17 Brougham Street	Owd Trafford
33 Brougham Street	
123-125 Brougham Street	Ionian Flats
7 Paterson Street	Waring Taylor house
49 Porritt Avenue	Kate Edger's house
9 Hawker Street	Hamilton Flats (designed by Anscombe)
43 Hawker Street	Bernard Freyberg's house
136/138 Brougham Street	Rev Moir's house
71 Hawker Street	Paterson's house (he built the Town Hall)
58 Pirie Street	Winder's house
Mount Victoria tunnel	(Seatoun, Northland, Karori, Hataitai Bus, all listed)

You'll note that we've included Kate Edger's house on our list of proposals. You might be interested in a recently published biography on her, which is definitely worth reading. You can listen to a review of it here:
<https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/ninetoon/audio/2018788997/book-review-kate-edger-the-life-of-a-pioneering-feminist>

80 Pirie Street (see over)

The serendipity of historical research never ceases to amaze. The Historical Note in this newsletter was inspired by a comment from our website support contact, who'd just discovered that his grandfather had lived at 80 Pirie Street and thought we might be interested. A quick check online revealed who he was.

No. 80 Pirie Street



The house at No 80 Pirie Street had some interesting occupants around the turn of the nineteenth/twentieth century. It was probably built before 1892 (because a house of similar style is on the Thomas Ward survey map), but in 1897 Mrs Frances Archer moved in and had the drainage connected to the Council system.

Frances Archer's husband, Joseph, had died five years before at the age of 54. They had been living at Blackbridge, Lower Hutt and the first notice of property sale following his death indicates that they must have been reasonably well-off.



Frances seems to have stayed on for a few more years, perhaps on part of the original property, but in 1897 finally sold up in Lower Hutt, selling furniture and equipment along with two cows in milk, a horse, buggy and harness. Now a sole parent, with at least three daughters, she moved to Mt Victoria. She lived there until 1911, having hosted the wedding reception for at least one daughter at her home in 1901.

There were then a couple of different occupants over the space of two years, before James McDonald moved in for four to five years. Although he was not a long-term occupant like Mrs Archer, he was a notable Wellingtonian.

In 1905 McDonald had been appointed to the Colonial (later Dominion) Museum as a museum assistant and draughtsman, and it is as a draughtsman he is listed in Wises Post Office Directory. In 1906 he was transferred back to the Tourist Department to work on displays for the New Zealand International Exhibition in Christchurch. The following year he began making films, officially recording various scenic attractions for the Tourist Department.

McDonald returned to the Dominion Museum in 1912 as photographer and art assistant so, for the period he lived at 80 Pirie Street, this was his employment. The photography and film he produced is considered one of the most important bodies of work documenting New Zealand's history. He had a long association with Elsdon Best, who had been appointed ethnologist at the Museum in 1910. In addition to responsibility for maintaining the photographic collection, his job included producing paintings, drawings and photographs for the Dominion Museum bulletins, many of which were written by Best.



Far left: James Ingram McDonald, circa 1925, by James McDonald. Te Papa (MU000523/001/0456)

Left: New Zealand Coat of Arms, 1904-1906, by James McDonald. Te Papa (MU000523/001/0321)

One of McDonald's duties was designing the New Zealand coat of arms, for which royal warrant was authorised on 26 April 1911. Although he applied unsuccessfully for the position of director at the Dominion Museum at one stage, after 1914 he was intermittently called on to be acting director because of the bad health of the incumbent.

Later, he also became assistant censor of cinematograph films. In 1926, he resigned from the museum and moved to Tokaanu. That same year he had been appointed to the Board of Maori Arts, and in Tokaanu he helped found Te Tuwharetoa School of Maori Art and Crafts to revive and nurture traditional arts. He died in Tokaanu in 1935.