

MT VICTORIA

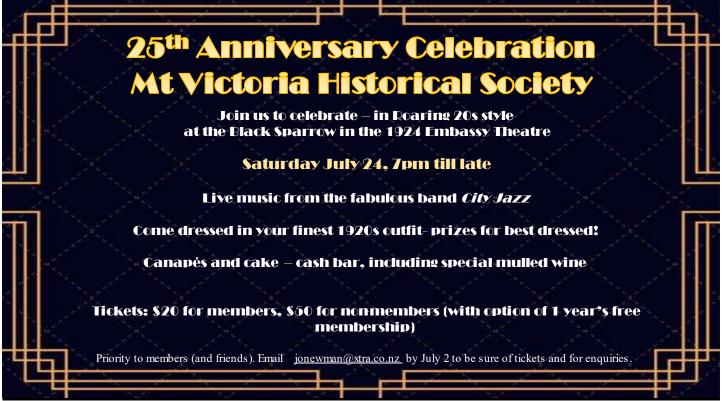
Historical Society News

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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/puuroro-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/ninetonoon/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.

Historical Note

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.

ROR SALE, PROPERTY AT THE LOWER HUTT.

The well-known Residence of the late Joseph Archer, at the Blackbridge, Lower Hutt, consisting of a well-built ten-roomed house (nearly new), with 44 neres of land, including a large orchard and garden. Also, three Sections of Land on the opposite side of the road to the above, containing about 24 acres each, one with farm buildings erected thereon. This desirable property is only 20 minutes' walk from the Lower Hutt railway station, and is in every way suitable for a country residence, with easy access to the city. To be sold separately or in one lot, as required. For terms, and further particulars, apply to

C. BROOKE-TAYLOR,

South British Insurance Office,

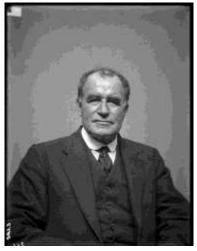
Lambton-quay.

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.