



ONslow HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Established 1968

Newsletter

May 2022

Hullo OHS Members!

Hope this finds you well and enjoying the return to much that we have put aside. OHS is taking a positive leap forward and have planned our first indoor event for the year – our AGM. The 12 months, April 2021 – March 2022 was a strange year and the ‘not-as-usual’ business will be presented in our President’s Report. If all goes according to plan, we will launch a new *Onslow Historian* and have a guest speaker; more about that in the next Newsletter.

In March, Chris Horne led the Khandallah Park Walk and has written an interesting article of the event on page 2. Chris invited Kate Jordan from the NZ Botanical Society to join in and she contributed to the dialogue en route. It is so good to have experts sharing their knowledge with us.

It was, also, a social occasion as Chris Lock and I met the walkers as they descended in the afternoon and we had refreshments together at Café du Parc. Outdoor events, breathing fresh air, are a sensible way of discovering history at this time.

All the best!

Judy Siers, President



Ray Chung talks with John Galloway en route. The walkers, with Chris Horne on the right. Refreshments and socialising after the walk. Thanks Ray Chung for the photographs, March 2022

OHS Events

June 2022 – December 2022

Thursday 9 June 2022

Onslow Historical Society AGM

K.A.T.E. ■ 7.45 for 8 pm

Followed by the launch of the 2020 edition of *The Onslow Historian*.

And a guest speaker.

Forth coming events

The unveiling of the Trooper Retter Memorial lantern, Johnsonville.

Date and details will be provided in the next newsletter.

Monday 24 October 2022

Labour Weekend Walk with Chris Horne.

December 2022

Our annual Christmas Party.

And more events subject to the new Committee’s ideas and contacts.

86 Khandallah Road, Wellington

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Khandallah Park walk – 20 March 2022

Khandallah Park was first designated as a ‘domain’ in 1909. It is thus one of Aotearoa/New Zealand’s oldest parks. It covers over 60 ha of native forest with walking tracks, picnic areas, birdlife, streams, a children’s play area and an open-air swimming pool. The park is an invaluable resource with historical, botanical, zoological and recreational attractions.

The recent issue of *The Onslow Historian* featured several articles on Khandallah Park and the location of our walk was chosen so members could experience its natural beauty and historic values.

Our group of eight people met at Simla Crescent Station. After a round of introductions and a briefing, we listed our names and emergency phone contacts on the trip register. Everyone received a colour copy of the Khandallah Park brochure produced by WCC’s Parks & Recreation Department in February 1992. The excellent document includes text, a map and four photographs.

We walked up Simla Crescent to the park entrance. In the brochure the track we were to climb to Mt Kaukau was called South Ridge Track. It is now named the Northern Walkway. Immediately inside the native-forest edge we saw the first of the two streams we were to see – Korimako Stream. Committee member, John Galloway, told us that the stream, which rises on the south flanks of Kaukau, is a tributary of Kaiwharawhara Stream which flows through Trelissick Park in Ngaio Gorge, then into Te Whanganui a Tara, our harbour. The cool air in the shady forest contrasted well with the heat and glare of the sun outside. During our climb we often saw thickets of kiekie covering the forest floor and sometimes in the forest canopy. Its leaves, up to 1.5 m long and 1.5 cm wide and look a bit like flax but unlike it have rough edges. We saw kohekohe, a tree which produces its flowers and grape-like fruit,

at times at eye-level on the trunk, more often higher up the tree. Several times we enjoyed the cheery call of the grey warbler/riroriro and the chortling of tūi. Kate Jordan, secretary of Wellington Botanical society, and I, also a member of “BotSoc”, showed our group two species of fern – crown fern/piupiu, and kiokio, both bearing fertile fronds which look dead but which are fertile fronds, so different from the more numerous infertile fronds.

We stopped at the junction with the track down to Khandallah Pool and asked if people wanted to keep climbing, or descend. Everyone was keen to continue climbing. At about 1 p.m. we arrived at the viewing platform on Kaukau, after climbing about 300 m from Simla Crescent Station, to sit on the grass to eat lunch and talk, while enjoying the perfect view and seeing people in other groups also happy to be there.

Well fed and rested, we descended to the track junction we had stopped at during our climb. We rang Café du Parc to ask them to reserve seats on the balcony for us all, then descended many steps, past another fine view over the harbour and Remutaka Range. At one site by the track we saw many seedlings of rewarewa and some saplings, all with the potential to become trees up to 30 m tall – evidence of good control of seed-eating rodents. Then we reached the floor of the valley of Waitohi/Tyer’s Stream – our second stream. It drains the northwestern slopes of Kaukau, then flows via Ngauranga Gorge into the harbour. We enjoyed walking the track beside the beautiful stream which flows over many greywacke boulders in its bed. To end our outing we sat on the café’s balcony, met Judy Siers and Chris Lock who awaited our arrival and enjoyed hot drinks and muffins.

Chris Horne
Leader

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Khandallah's Horse Trough



Two views of the Horse Trough on Khandallah Road, opposite house numbers 52–58.

PHOTOGRAPHER: GRETA LANGE, 2022.



Korimako Stream

Mention of the Korimako Stream in the Khandallah Walk article reminded me of how it travels through our area. It flows, open in some parts and culverted in others, so it can be hard to find. From the lower slopes of Mt Kaukau it exits opposite Ngatoto Street corner, into a valley running alongside Khandallah Road, with the railway line on the upper bank, and on to Awarua Street junction where it joins a tributary (Awarua means 'two streams'). Continuing it flows through Cummings Park, under the intersection at the Ngaio Town Hall corner, and opens into the valley beneath the Ngaio Tennis Courts, dividing Kenya and Waikowhai Streets. It joins the Kaiwharawhara Stream at the top of Ngaio Gorge/Trellisick Park and can be seen as it flows out to the sea at Kaiwharwhara.*

The waters are just streams now and it is hard to imagine the raging river of the 1840s

that powered Wellington's first major timber mill. The site was in the valley on the corner of Crofton Road and Kenya Street of today. Samuel Brees painted this scene – remember? – you can see it on page 19 of our last *Onslow Historian* Volume 50, 2020.



The earliest known photograph of the Khandallah trough. Titled: *By the wayside, Khandallah 1913.*

PHOTOGRAPHER: MAURICE CROMPTON-SMITH.

* A conservationist's plug: it is here that little blue penguins nest and breed.



Pre-automobile fuelling station

One person pleased to see this historic horse trough back on its old site in Khandallah Road is Miss Elsie Crompton-Smith, who has lived in the area all her life.

Born in Khandallah in 1901, she says the trough has been there for as long as she can remember.

"In the early days it was a wooden trough. People used to come up from town

on horseback and everything used to be delivered by horse."

The trough was carefully moved some months ago while drains were laid. Now that it is back on the old site, the city council intends to pave a small area around it and put up a plaque telling something of its history.

It was one of a string of troughs which lined the route from Wellington to Porirua and on up the North Island.

to Post 13-2-1982

A clipping from the *Evening Post* 13 February 1982 pictures long serving member of OHS, Elsie Crompton-Smith, at the time when the trough was removed from its original position to allow road works and the installation of underground pipes and connections.

The Horse Trough

The Horse Trough, on Khandallah Road was filled with water from the Korimako stream and the natural spring alongside. Way back in early Wellington days, as the suburbs developed, water troughs were built. Horses were the main form of transport for people and the delivery of goods and services. *Papers*

Past reveals many stories and *Letters to the Editor* about the humane treatment owed to "our splendid horses", so a plentiful number of well-placed troughs were built. As times changed they became a 'thing of the past' and slowly disappeared from the landscape. But the Khandallah Road trough has longevity. Firstly, Hap Aplin, Ngaio's local Council employed roadsman, used his horse and cart long after others had retired, and after that nearby residents requested it stay. It was revealed that they collected fresh spring water for themselves, and in return kept the trough clean. They carried cups in their coat pockets for a refreshing drink.



Local residents, Isobel and Clara Colpus helped to clean the trough after roadworks were completed in the 1980s. The groove in the concrete indicates where the pipe was positioned to carry water into the trough.

Originally the troughs were wooden structures, and many were quite roughly built, only meant for use as long as required in a particular location. Ngaio and the Ngahauranga Gorges had many wooden structures. But in the cities and towns more permanent structures were designed in style, were well-built and well-maintained troughs. Concrete became the favoured material. And so it was in Khandallah.

Memories for the Colpus girls went back to childhood days when their father built a cart to hold two large kerosine tins that the girls could wheel down and fill with water. They loved the fresh spring water, it was a treat, but it was also an essential source when their rainwater ran out. “Residents walked everywhere in the olden days,” they told me during a chat in 2001. “We would each carry a cup with us when we went walking so we could have a drink on our way.”

After the road reconstruction, the trough was repositioned and blended into the landscape as before, but the only water supply was rain water. It had moved from usefulness to become a historic item and one that the Onslow Historic Society welcomed.

It was stated in the *Evening Post*, in 1982, that a heritage plaque was forthcoming from WCC. Really? Well, we are patient people – excuse the cliché – we understand that “good things take time”.



The Khandallah Road Horses’ Trough, c 1985.
PHOTOGRAPH: R.M MCKINLAY, SIMLA CRESCENT, KHANDALLAH.



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Khandallah School History

The OHS has had a collection of Khandallah School's historical papers and photographs in its archives for many years; this is the primary school situated on Clark Street.

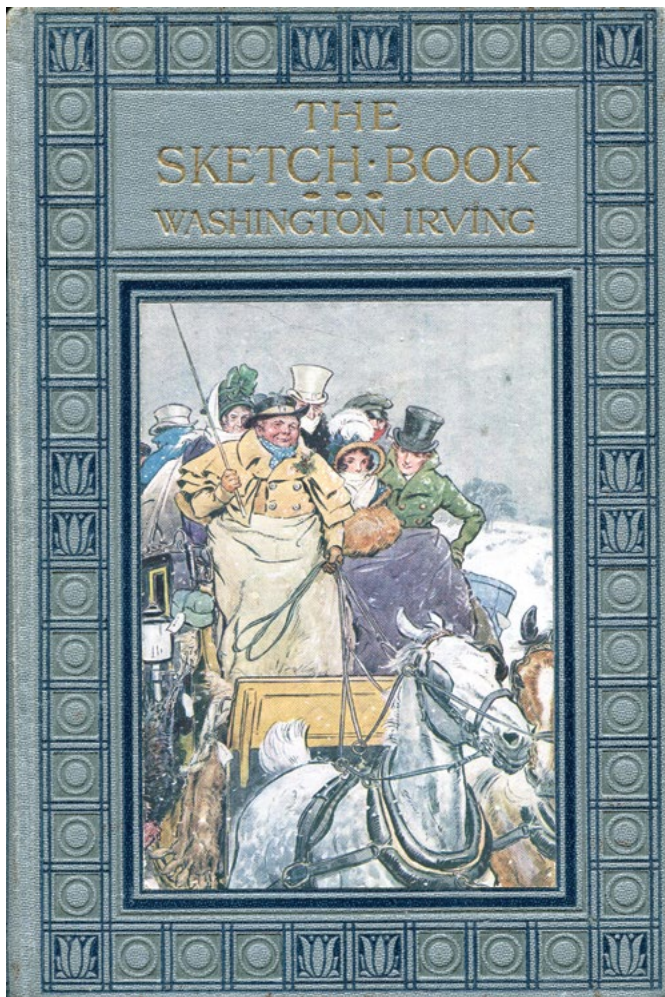
The collection has increased slowly as members of OHS, local historians and former students have recorded memories, collected photographs and donated material to the Society.

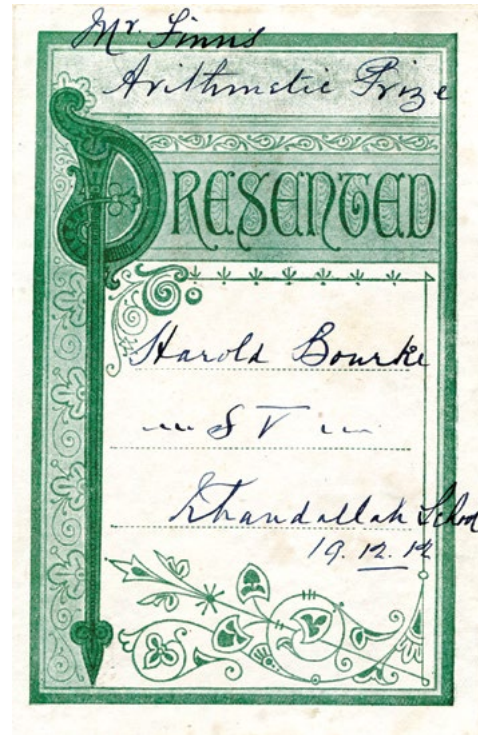
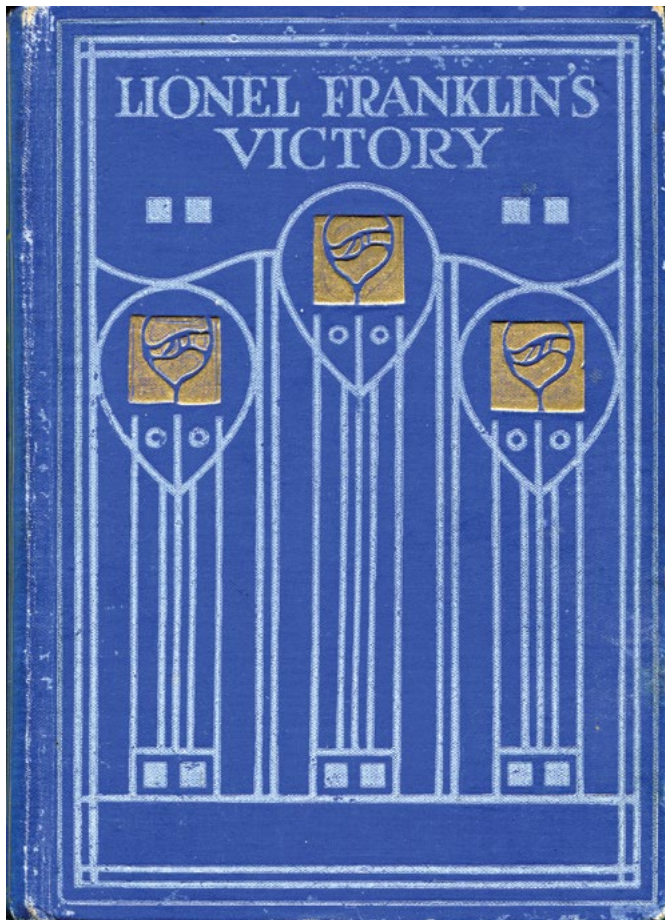
So, we welcomed a recent addition. A few months ago the receptionist at the school

contacted us to see if we would like to have two books that had been donated to them. The school does not have an archive but wanted to be sure the books would be preserved.

They were both presentation volumes, awarded to Harold Bourke in 1912 for 'Mr Finn's Arithmetic Prize' and in 1913 for 'drawing'. The inside front cover plates tell the story. But not the full story because we don't know who Harold Bourke was or anything more about him. Perhaps a reader will recognize the name and provide information.

Provenance of the books is skimpy. OHS member Stan Pillar was given them by the





late John Risenborough, a former school principal of local primary schools, with the request that they should be placed “somewhere safe”. Stan chose the Khandallah School and the School chose to hand them on the OHS. Yes, a bit of a party game of ‘pass the parcel’ ! Thank you Stan for initiating this. The books are very typical of publishing of the times. Case-bound in coloured linen cloth with embossed design work, *The Sketch Book*

in Victorian style, and *Lionel Franklin's Victory* in bold, fashionable Art Nouveau, a royal-blue coloured background with lighter blue and gold touches. The authors, respectively: Washington Irving, a popular author of many books and E. Van Sommer, less well known; published by Cassell and Company and T Nelson and Sons.

The books can be viewed at the KATE.