



# ONslow HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Established 1968

## Newsletter

January 2022

### Happy New Year OHS members

#### Welcome to 2022

We are starting the new year in good heart and health with an inspiring and energetic walk on Waitangi Holiday Day 7 February. It will be led by Chris Horne again, remember last year's event? It was so successful.

Read the details and arrangements on page 3, and we'll cross fingers for perfect weather and a good turnout.

### In memory of a missing friend

It was a sad moment when I read in the Family Notices in *The Dominion Post* on 27 November 2021 that Dianne Small, 1948–2021, had died on the 23rd. This was unexpected news to most of us at OHS and we learned that it was a short illness and that she was only 73 years of age. Dianne was a lively person full of character with a warm and friendly personality. She was loyally supportive of OHS and its objectives, had great interest in local heritage and history, and will be remembered for her attendance at our events. For the best part of a decade she was Minute Secretary on the OHS Committee.

Dianne will be missed by many. We send heartfelt condolences to her family and close friends.

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### OHS Events January – May 2022

#### Waitangi Day Holiday Monday 7 February 2022

##### A Waitangi Holiday Walk in the Park

A 3–4 hour walk in Khandallah Park – A Recreational and Forest Park.

Starting at Simla Crescent Station at 10.45 am.

*Note the change in the time from the previous announcement.*

The location has been specially chosen as our recent *Historian* has aroused fresh interest in the Park.

#### Reconvened Event

##### Scheduled for March 2022, date yet to be arranged

An afternoon with authors Julia Millen and Anne Manchester

#### OHS AGM 2022

##### May 2022, date and guest speaker yet to be arranged



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## Khandallah Park – A Recreational and Forest Park

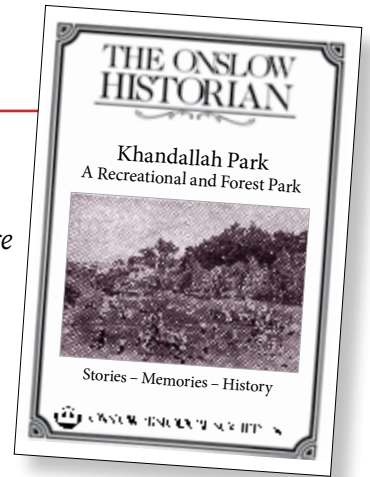
Our last *Onslow Historian* has been well received. There have been many favourable emails and phone calls, and many extra copies have been sold. Here is a letter from OHS member Ron Ward:

*Thank you for your excellent retrospective of Khandallah Park. It is a venue where my and other families often gathered for picnics, where I learned to swim and enjoyed the stream that was the home of “Yabbies”. It also abounded in Onehunga weed, making bare-foot travel over the lawns needing to be done at speed. In discussing the park with my elder brother in Australia I asked him about one visit to the Park where several of the party went off through the bush to visit a local feature called (or they called)*

*“Indian Rock”. The feature was about an hour’s walk away. I was too young to undertake what was a vigorous walk. When the party returned they reported that the rock formation did, indeed, resemble the face of a native American. If anybody has any idea concerning this rock formation It would be interesting to hear of it as my brother no longer recalls the picnic in question.*

*Regards, Ron Ward*

Who would like to inform us further about the rock formation? Email me at [siersjudy@gmail.com](mailto:siersjudy@gmail.com) and I will publish this in the next newsletter.



## Crofton House (formerly Crofton College), 21 Kenya Street, Ngaio

OHS member, Margaret Domett, sent me a clipping recently from a Wellington College publication. It was about the special occasion of the College’s first cricket match in 1871 and reads:

*Sunday 21 February marked 150 years to the day that Wellington College played its first cricket match. The game was played against Crofton College which was located in Kenya Street, Ngaio. The school closed in 1875 but the building survives as a private residence and is one of the oldest in Wellington. Sadly there is no record of the match. We can only say with certainty that cricket was the winner.*



This photograph of Crofton College appears on page 61 in our first volume of *Wellington’s Northern Suburbs 1840–1916*. It depicts a casual afternoon of sport on the front lawn, the boys ready for cricket and the young ladies look like they are dressed for a game of croquet, c. 1870.

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# A Waitangi Day Holiday Walk in the Park

**Join us for a 3–4 hour walk in  
Khandallah Park – A Recreational and Forest Park**

**Waitangi Day Holiday Monday 7 February 2022**

**Leader Chris Horne says:**

Starting around 10.45 am from Simla Crescent Station, we'll walk on tracks in beautiful native forest with trees large and small, fine ferns, agile vines, a regenerating understorey and tiny creeks. Enjoy the sight and sounds of native birds. We'll climb the Northern Walkway to Mt Kaukau's lookout for spectacular views, then descend to Waitohi/Tyer's Stream and Café du Parc.

This will bring you to the Park entrance/exit, alongside the swimming pool, at the end of Woodmancote Road. There will be choices here: refreshment and conversation at the Café, a swim in the pool, and a walk back to the station either by footpath via Woodmancote Road, Boxhill and onwards, or a short walk through the Park and along Clark Street and Simla Crescent.

**Wear:** sturdy shoes or light boots and clothing suitable for the weather. In a small pack carry clothing for cold or wet weather should that eventuate.

**Bring:** lunch, a thermos, mask, sun-block, personal medication and if you wish, walking poles.

**Catch:** 10.32 am Johnsonville Line train from Wellington Station or 10.30 am train from Johnsonville Station.

**Meet:** Simla Crescent Station at 10.45 am.

**Car parking:** There is plenty of parking space around the station.

You will be met by John Galloway, 'meet and greeter'.

**Enquires/replies:** Judy Siers: [siersjudy@gmail.com](mailto:siersjudy@gmail.com) – this is her first choice, or telephone: 04 934 6334 or 027 345 0374.

Looking forward to seeing you!!!

**PS.** A suggestion: read the last issue of *The Onslow Historian* and brush up on your knowledge before the event!



A scene in a New Zealand Forest near Porerua. In *Adventure in New Zealand*, Edward Jerningham Wakefield wrote of the virgin bush, west and north of Kaiwharawhara, containing webs of supplejack, vines and undergrowth between the noble forest trees of totara, rimu, matai, rata, hinau and many other varieties.

New Zealand Illustrated by George French Angus, published in 1846.



## The Spatial Plan

It's a good 18 months ago that we were first alerted and concerned about the new proposed WCC spatial plan. A lot has happened since and I know many of you have submitted to WCC and aired your views about the potential loss of heritage and character in our northern suburbs.

The most recent legislation was passed before the closure of parliament last year and contained contentious mandate affecting our future built environment.

The RMA Enabling Housing Supply (and Other Matters) Amendment Bill allows further intensified high rise and in-fill development, and it will be even easier to do so in the future. New construction will be able to proceed unheeded without the old formal process of application that was subject to community or neighborhood approval when exceeding the rules; as well we have lost the right to object.

For Wellingtonians this is worrying indeed as many of us believe that the new District Plan rules fail to meet criteria that ensures the best outcome for an expanding Wellington as a liveable/ recreational/workplace/cultural city, and a capital city, of the future. We have been positioned by law to provide for an increase of 80,000 new residents over the next 30 years. This in itself is a debatable issue – is it realistic, is it doable?

Henry Cooke in *The Dominion Post* December 15, 2021 reported: *a sweeping bill forcing councils to allow townhouses of up to three storeys, and with up to three dwellings on almost all residential sites ... and will just require building consent, not resource consent.*

David Turner, senior lecturer, Unitec School of Architecture, in his punchy article, 18/12/21, in *The Dominion Post* wrote in no uncertain terms that we must *brace ourselves for the shock.* Wellington is one of the eight cities in NZ that will have to abide by legislative decree. *Crudely put, cities need to cram more housing.*

This new method of building permissions goes against the grain for most of us, it fails to provide for appropriate consideration of the character and heritage protection that we at OHS have fought for over the last 50 years. Sadly, it looks like it has all been in vain.

I loved the way Jane Clifton put it in her last *Listener* column for 2021:

*It has been the year of “Love thy neighbor – and that’s an order!” Under the new housing density accord, many people will soon be never more than a metre or two away from multiple neighbours. What has become known as parliament’s townhouse bill to its supporters and the battery-chook bill to its opponents is now being diluted by a few spatial metres ... even though ... an overwhelming majority of submissions were in*

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*reminder about the importance of light, space and greenery – and signs of decelerated population growth post Covid.*

More from David Turner: he reminded readers of a nostalgic past: *For 100 years we have hung on to our tradition of privately owned quarter-acre sections; at 10 to 12 dwellings per hectare (dph) their density is the best housing model we can imagine.*

Our WCC's District Plan will guide the Officers administering the change. Our only way to achieve a happy result for all parties will be through the standards of WCC officer decisions as they approve and issue permits to developers. This department of Council will need to be well staffed by qualified and experienced people capable of appraising plans submitted and the impact any new development will have in the existing landscape, and in staff numbers that can handle the volume and complexity of the applications.

It is possible to have high rise, additional homes, refined and improved transport routes and commercial expansion while retaining the best of what we have – but to achieve this will take excellent architectural and town planning and Officers' desire to do it well. We need elected Councillors who will support this philosophy and the staff to execute it.

We can play our part prior to the next local elections by encouraging candidates with an empathy and intelligence to stand for office. They in turn can establish policy in their governance roles to ensure WCC officers can deliver. The departure of some current Councillors, and suitable replacements, are the key to this.

The transcripts of the meetings of this triennium reveal consistent ideological speeches and decision-making that has not been helpful in maintaining fair, unbiased results for our built and landscaped environments. My personal observation is that dialogue around the Council table has been short on productive and open debate.

So OHS members, we must not take our finger off the pulse. The future of protecting our heritage and the character of our suburbs depends on it.

If readers are interested in up-dating on the subject go to **Wellington Scoop** online and read Felicity Wong and Ben Schrader's articles, and there are others too. Enter the writer's name in the search bar. The subject has been tirelessly reported on this site, articles of merit and long and consistent remarks from the public – too much to summarise here.

It's a complicated issue AND such an important one.



THROUGH THE GREENSTONE DOOR

SONGS OF KHANDALLAH

I.

ABOVE the city suburbs swathed in mist,  
Khandallah stands, with golden sunbeams kissed.  
Here houses do not crowd like swarming bees,  
And here are seen no stunted city trees:  
Across our streets no ugly tram wires spread,  
The clear blue sky is over us instead.

But here are gardens with tall trees and lawns,  
The golden furze our twisting roads adorns,  
The air a peaceful pleasant silence fills,  
A jewel set alone among the hills.

-D.E.C. HEFFORD.

II.

KHANDALLAH is a place apart,  
Unspoiled as yet by man.  
It is indeed in every way,  
"A resting place" a "Khan."

A little basin 'midst the hills  
Which clothed in nature's dress,  
A feeling gives serene and calm  
A sense of peacefulness.

No houses stand there row on row  
In bleak monotony,  
But homes are dotted 'midst the trees  
In perfect harmony.

It surely is a wondrous place,  
With beauty everywhere.  
One does not need the name to know  
That God has rested there.

-J.N. MANSFIELD.

## A touch of nostalgia

As I researched on various topics over the holidays I came across copies of an old Wellington College magazine. Titled *Through the Greenstone Door*, it was a compilation of creative writing from the students of Form 4A in 1936. The poems are called *Songs of Khandallah* and well describe the suburbs as felt by two resident teenage boys, D.E.C. Hefford and J.N. Mansfield.

All the best for 2022

**Judy Siers**, President