



ONslow HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Established 1968

Newsletter

December 2022

Festive Greetings everyone. What a joy! We were able to start our new financial year with a flourish and put the memory of the dreary preceding years behind us.

First, in October, we organized a heritage walk with Chris Horne and we took part in Wellington’s Heritage Week. OHS staged an event for the *Independent Herald* newspaper’s 50 year birthday in November and a few Sundays later a happy gathering for our annual Christmas party.



PHOTO: PAUL STAPP

Chris Horne’s event on Labour Day led walkers on an interesting city, Kelburn and Thorndon tour. This photograph, taken by Paul Stapp, was during a pause on Flagstaff Hill. The history goes back to 1844 when a flag and two eighteen pounder cannons were placed here. The Pakeha settlers were scared of attack from the tangata whenua after the Wairau Affray in 1843.

OHS Events 2023

Waitangi Holiday Day Monday 6 February 2023

**Waitangi Day Walk with Chris Horne
Mt Kau Kau – the north-side story**

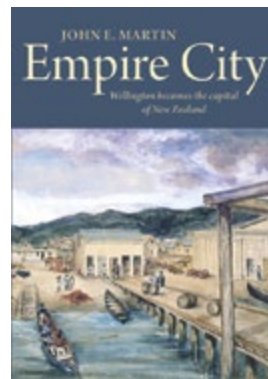
It will be a morning start at Raroa Station, then a walk through Onslow College’s grounds to Johnsonville Park, through regenerating bush and the remains of Johnsonville’s first water supply scheme, along the Northern walkway to Mt Kau Kau, ending at Khandallah Park.

February 2023



An afternoon with Jenny Patrick talking about her new novel *Harbouring*. Set historically in early Wellington, this new work from Jenny has made the best bookseller lists for several weeks.

March 2023



An evening with John Martin, author of *Empire City: Wellington Becomes the Capital of New Zealand*.

Ref: The *Listener* review by Chris Moore, 10 December 2022

Independent Herald celebrates 50 years

The *Independent Herald* birthday party was what many described as a “roaring success” and with nearly 60 attendees at Kate it certainly felt very friendly! The newspaper gave us good coverage – a full front page, a second page story and this photograph of Ruth Thomas cutting our cake.



Long-serving *Independent Herald* editor, Ruth Thomas, cutting the 50th anniversary cake.
PHOTO: FRANK NEILL



The *Independent Herald* first hit the streets on 1 November 1972.

The now 50-year-old community newspaper had its genesis in the demise of the *Times-Herald*, which served the northern suburbs from 1961 until its demise in 1972.

Two local residents, Bronwyn Gray and Judith Holloway, moved with speed to plan a replacement. With the help of local organiser Egan Ogier and financial backing from the Johnsonville Community Licensing Trust, the new *Independent Herald* was launched.

Judith was the paper's first Editor while Bronwyn became the Business and Advertising Manager. They led the paper for just a short while, however.

Ruth Thomas took over as Editor shortly after the paper was launched, beginning her 20-year service with the *Independent Herald*.

Ruth quickly developed a reputation for “crusading journalism”, culminating in several journalistic excellence awards.

“What the *Independent Herald* was all about could be summed up in one word – community. It was all about community,” Ruth said at the 50th birthday celebration.

“We were getting great stories because we were out there in the community. People knew us and would talk to us.”

Her reporters were a network of mostly young mothers, or friends, who represented the suburb they lived in..

Advertisers and community leaders were enthusiastic and so support quickly grew, and the paper moved from publishing fortnightly to coming out every week.

“A good local paper was also an excellent first stepping stone for journalism students preparing to make their mark in the business”, Ruth said.

Martin de Ruyter, then aged 17, credits his work for the *Independent Herald* as “the basis of my future career”. A career as a top news photographer culminated in 35 years with the *Nelson Mail*.

Ruth recalls many highlights – serious, funny, such as choosing a team for the council, some involving the threat of closure to the railway line or local children – who knitted enough peggy squares to wrap around the Beehive.

“I need to impress upon all of you the importance of a newspaper as a resource for information,” the Onslow Historical Society President Judy Siers said at the 50th celebration.

“It is like no other.

“I hereby acknowledge all those who have worked with the *Independent Herald* over the last 50 years, those who ensured its longevity right through to the present ownership.”

Judy noted the words of Sir Bernard Fergusson, when he was touring New Zealand as Governor General in 1965. “Suburban newspapers have enormous value, playing a part out of all proportion to their circulation.”

Extracts from the *Independent Herald*, 10 November 2022

We started the Christmas party with entertainment, a musical interlude with *The Swing Club Ukulele Music Group*, seven ukulele players and singers that set the scene for a happy time. They played an all-time favourite *Blue Smoke* – a nostalgic moment for many of us. We don't have to look far to find historic gems.



The musicians performing at our Christmas Party Sunday 27 November 2022. PHOTOGRAPHS: GERALDINE NEEDHAM-GIRVEN

The Club has many musician members working under the leadership of Lynn Blann who performed for us with Margaret Puller, Diana McCrae, Margaret Foden, Shirley Morrison, Peter Gorman and Les Maiden.

Farewell to David Beattie

The Christmas party was a gathering of old and new members of the Society, and it was special to have long time member, David Beattie, with us as we may not see him again for a while. David is leaving Khandallah and moving to the South Island to live. We will remember him for the wonderful musical occasions he presented over many years. He played our antique and portable organ (that we rescued from the Johnsonville Methodist church) and more recently presented heritage movie shows and played his original piano accompaniment. These were staged at his and the late Loretta Lander's home in Woodmancote Road. They were unforgettable experiences. Perhaps David will come back and present another performance sometime – meantime David we all wish you “all the best”!



Title page from the *Onslow News Christmas* Number 1955, No. 107 December 1955.

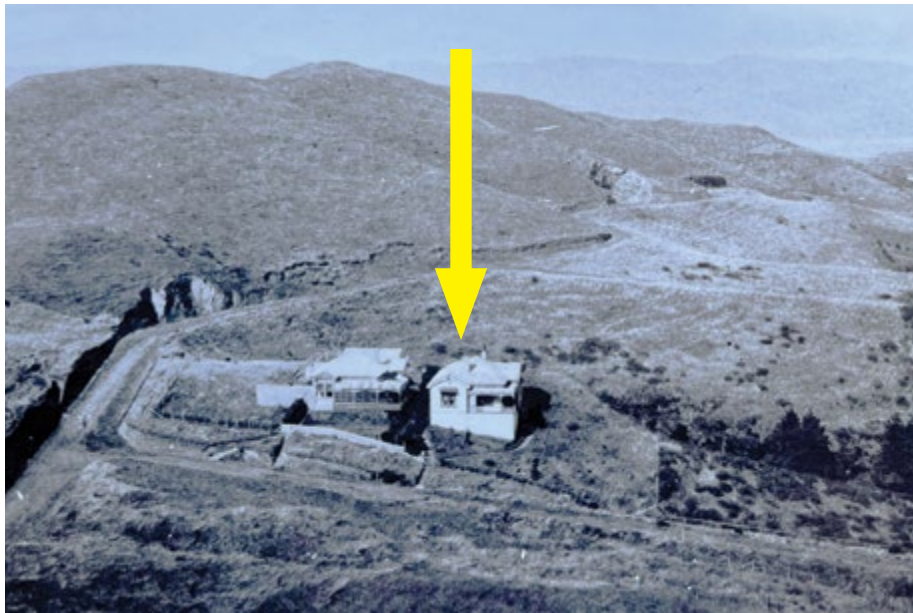
“Christmas Greetings. We take this opportunity of thanking our many associates for their help and wishing them the compliments of the Season. We hope our readers appreciate the contribution to the ‘Onslow News’ that is made by our Printers, the ‘Hutt News’, the Post Office staff, those who send along notes so regularly, and our advertisers

House sale reveals history

The property at 26 Omar Street, Khandallah is currently on the market. It's a historical building dating back to c. 1910 and this early photograph is evidence of its lonely isolation at the time of construction.

Tommy's Real Estate is handling the sale and their publicity includes contemporary photographs. They reveal a beautiful, much modernised house, but in a very different setting – houses are built all around it. Go to the site, you'll be intrigued:

<https://www.tommys.co.nz/property/26-omar-street-khandallah-6035/>



Hardly recognisable today, but this was the Rangoon-Omar Street area at the turn of the century. The yellow arrow points to 26 Omar Street, home to the Meek family.

Sorting through archives, OHS can add some heritage information to this story.

Khandallah land, north of Station Road, was subdivided and auctioned in 1907. The two houses, in the above photograph, were built on land purchased by the Daniell/s (left) and the Meek (right) families. As the sections were laid out on the *Sunnybank Estate*, roads were designed and given their first names: Glen, Peter, Hilda and Elizabeth Street, names that would change to Indian Raj influenced choices in the future. Information about the Meek family, at 26 Omar Street, includes mention of young lad Dalliwell Meek who was a member of the first Khandallah Scout Troop formed in 1911; and further reference is made re his action in WWI – he had fought alongside his Khandallah friend, Lance Terrini, and the photograph of Dal (right) was taken when they were both in Paris. (Reference *The Onslow Historian* vol. 15, No. 2, 1985)



Dal Meek taken in Paris.
PHOTO: OHS ARCHIVE

Illustration on page 5: Plan of The Sunnybank Estate Khandallah to be sold by auction by MacDonald Wilson & Co, 20 March 1907.

THE SUNNYBANK ESTATE

KHANDALLAN

To be Sold by Public Auction by

MACDONALD WILSON & CO

In their EXCHANGE LAND MART,
No. 48, Lambton Quay, Wellington
ON WEDNESDAY EVENING 20th MARCH
1907 AT 7.30 O'CLOCK

The Great Residential Suburb of the
Northern Portion of the City of Wellington.

WITHIN A FEW MINUTES OF THE CITY BY RAIL,
AND ALSO CONNECTED BY MAIN ROADS.

SEVENTY - ONE
Superior Building Sections.

MACDONALD, WILSON & CO. are favored with instructions from the owners of the Sunnybank Estate to sell by Public Auction as above:

The Whole of the Beautiful Sunnybank Estate, consisting of

71 SEVENTY-ONE SEVENTY-ONE

of the land comprising of Khandallah's Villa Sites, including the Main Road and Four New Streets, averaging about one-quarter of an acre each.

The Sunnybank Estate is one of the most choice of the many high-class properties in Khandallah. It is admirably adapted for residential and suburban use, and is situated in the most desirable position. The land is fertile, and the view from every part of it is wide and cheerful.

The Sunnybank Estate Sections are in close proximity to the Khandallah Railway Station, and are therefore exceptionally accessible. When the Government at the end of the year takes over the Wellington-Massey Railway, all traffic will be right through to the Government Wellington Station, Khandallah will be within ten minutes of Lambton Quay. A new frequent railway service will follow, as the Government will be unable, like the Company, to ignore the wishes of the suburban residents. Ten-day return tickets can be had to the City at a cost of only 11s. to 24s. per trip. 50-day tickets are available at under 24s. per trip, and special rates from Karoro are available at 18s. per trip.

Contracts are now being arranged for the construction of a bridge, also of Glen Street, Peter Street, Hilda Street, and Elizabeth Street, all of which will be completed to the satisfaction of the Ombudsman through Council.

The Title is Good Transfer, and on payment of the Purchase Money an immediate transfer will be given to each purchaser.

The Terms of Sale are wonderfully easy, and should prove very attractive to investor and speculator—
Five per cent. deposit at sale,
Five per cent. in three months,
Five per cent. in six months,
Five per cent. in nine months,
Five per cent. in twelve months,
Remainder in Three Years. Interest 4 per cent. per annum on unpaid balance of purchase money.

Those who desire to secure a suburban home should think seriously of the Sunnybank Estate, and make a careful inspection of the sections. They should remember that Khandallah has been well christened "The Arcadian Suburb of the Hills"; that it lies embosomed among hills and dale, a group of lovely houses and flowering gardens, including a beautiful beauty that make it quite delightful. It is only five miles from the City of Wellington, and has access by a very fine road and two lines of railway, the Wellington-Massey which runs through the Property, and the Government, from Wellington to Karoro, and thence by a short walk along the Main road. Khandallah is a recreation, its pure air, bright atmosphere, and many sunny outlooks is a healthy and ideal home site for adults and children.

The average man, be he Government or Merchant's clerk, or others, will do well to remember that under "The Advances to Workers' Act" of last session, if they purchase a section at Sunnybank, say for from £100 to £150, they can, under that Act, obtain an advance of £350 to build a house. The interest on such advance including sinking fund, being only 4 1/2 per cent. per annum. This means that every man can obtain his own freehold home for a payment of some 8s. per week.

Nothing is more certain than the fact that Khandallah's Building Sections of this character will rise by year give in value, and in that respect make the most satisfactory investments to be made.

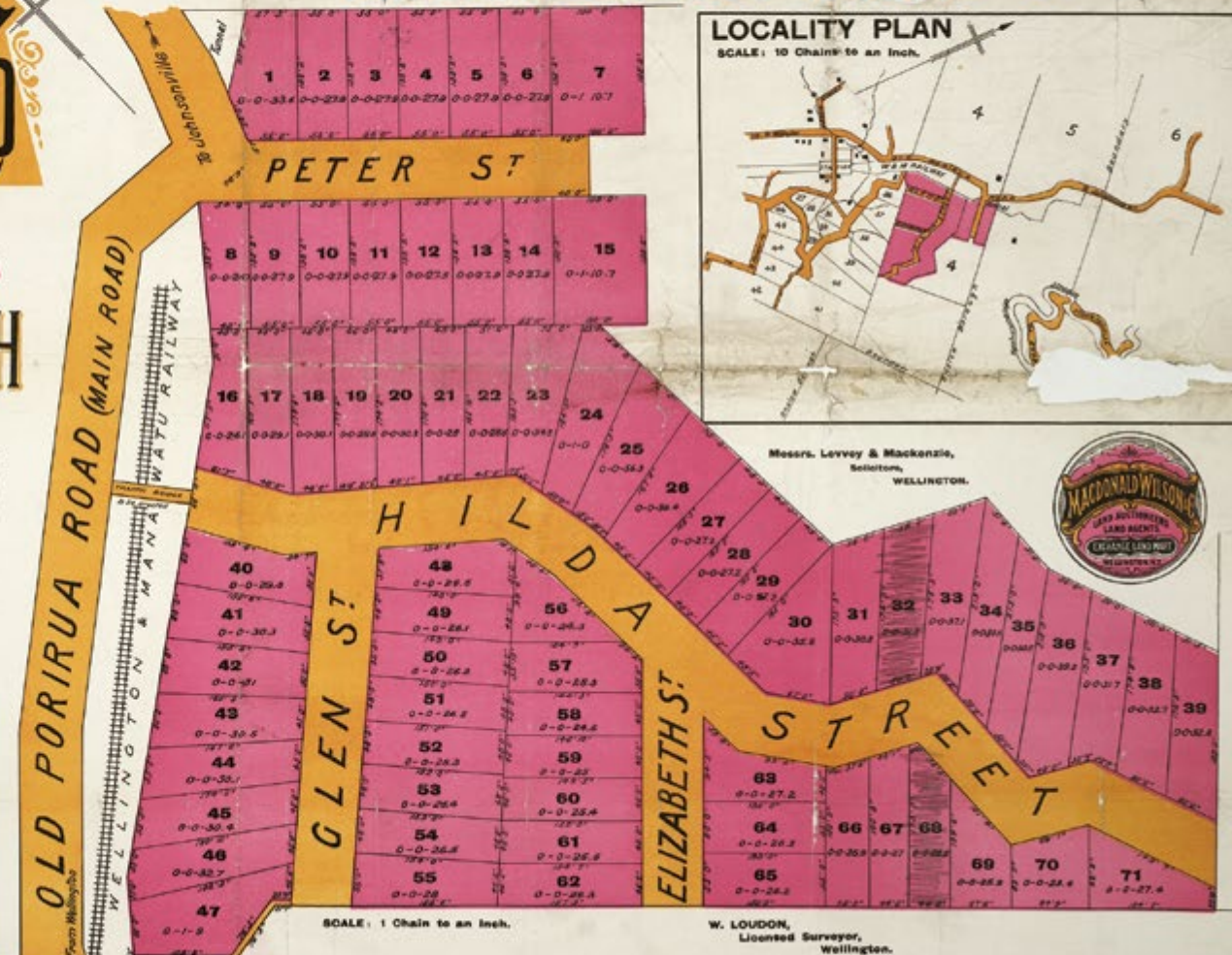
For Conditions of sale, Litographic Plans, and further details apply to the Auctioneers, who will arrange to show any intending purchaser over the above Sections.

LOCALITY PLAN

SCALE: 10 Chains to an Inch.



Messrs. Levvey & Mackenzie,
Solicitors,
WELLINGTON.



SCALE: 1 Chain to an Inch.

W. LOUDON,
Licensed Surveyor,
Wellington.

Nguzon & Hicks Litho Wellington

2022 history for future record

You may have missed this story that appeared on page 10, in the *Dominion Post* Wednesday 25 May 2022.



After 60 years, the top part of the aerial on Mt Kaukau in Wellington is removed by helicopter. It is the most visible high point in the Wellington landscape. PHOTO: KORDIA

City's highest point gets a bit lower

Sophie Cornish and Erin Gourley

Wellington's skyline is a little shorter after its highest point, the transmission tower on top of Mt Kaukau, was partly dismantled.

Helicopters hovered above the 122-metre radio transmitter on the mountain summit in the city's northern suburbs and carried away the top 18m in pieces over five separate trips.

Sally Vernon from Kordia, the telecommunications company that owns the tower, said the top section was redundant because digital television did not require the same height (it used to house analogue TV aerials). "It wasn't doing anything, so we thought, why have it?"

Wellington City Council

historian Gabor Toth said it made him quite sad to see the top of the "elegant structure" that graced the 445m summit for nearly 60 years removed. It is the most visible high point in the Wellington landscape.

Built in 1965, the design was unique, with its Eiffel tower-style curved lower legs – a feature that helped it deal with extreme wind conditions, Toth said. "It survived the Wahine storm of April 1968."

The removal made him consider attitudes to what constituted heritage, he said, pointing out that in many countries radio and TV masts were considered an important part of industrial history.

The top of the tower became redundant in 2013, when analogue

television transmission ended in New Zealand.

The tower was designed in Japan, something Toth said was "quite remarkable" considering it was built only 20 years after World War II.

Before the Mt Kaukau aerial was built, television broadcasting was limited. Transmissions from central Wellington started in 1961 but did not reach far.

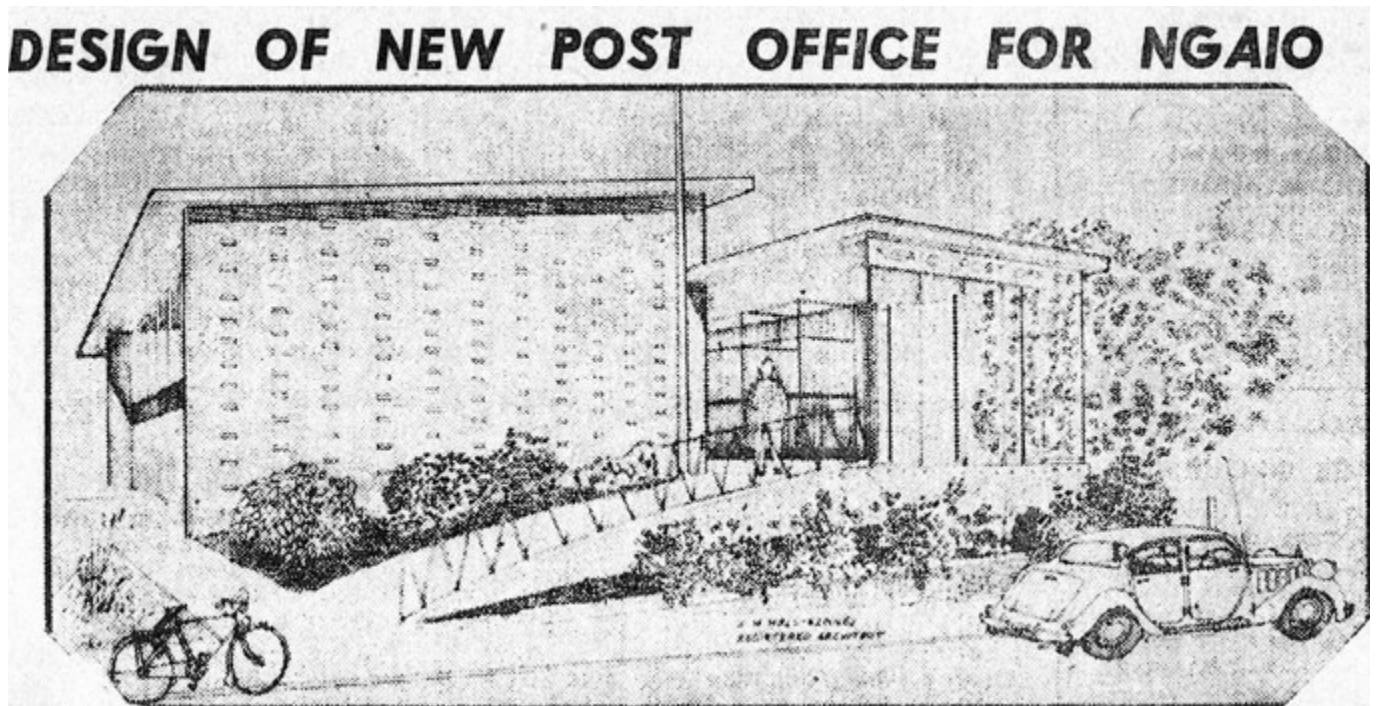
When the new aerial started operating in 1965, the range extension of the signal was "enormous", Toth said.

"Back then it was just one VHF TV channel, but the social impact was huge and within a couple of years of the transmitter opening, most of Wellington's suburban cinemas started to close."

From the archives

Ngaio Post Office

Snippets of news of the construction of the proposed Ngaio Post Office building trickled through the 1950s. At last, in May 1959, details were publicly announced and the *Onslow News* published the design of the new building. It opened the following year. In 2005 the Post Office closed and Ngaio residents had to travel to the Khandallah Post Office on Ganges Road. These illustrations tell the story.



Architect's sketch of the modernistic Post Office proposed for Ngaio, for which tenders have been called recently. The Post office which is to be built in Ottawa Road will be finished in brick veneer and will have a glass-walled entrance at the top of a ramp approach.
 (Architect, J. H. Hall-Kenny)



PROPERTIES SELL

NGAIO

Your choice starts here 42 Ottawa Road
OPEN HOME SUNDAY 12-12.45pm

*Be it a home
 Be it a home and office
 Be it an office/clinic/surgery
 Be it an investment
 Be for its heritage*

Landmark building, which with its configuration layout, is ideal for multiple uses. Presented in an extremely tidy condition, this property will create an immense amount of interest. R.V. \$135,000. Currently zoned residential.

Grand Tender 12.00pm 6th May 2005 (Khandallah Office)
 To view phone Marilyn on (06)861 468-737 or (021) 983-106 www.leaders.co.nz

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