



ONslow HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Established 1968

Newsletter

May 2021

Dear Members,

April flew by very quickly and here we are in the month of May. That means it's AGM time for OHS; the 2020–2021 financial year has passed in a strange way with a very different programme from any previous 12 months.

But first back to April, it was such a pleasure to have a full house for Gábor Tóth's presentation. I have had enthusiastic feedback so I hope Gábor can work on a new presentation for 2022. Mention was made of the booklet *The Precinct Planning for Wellington 1965*, by Gabites and Beard Consultants. We have this in our Booklet Library so it is available to read during our open hours or by appointment.

Our programme for the rest of this year is listed in the column opposite. First is the AGM later in this month and we have invited Bruce Murray to be our guest speaker. Details are on page 2 and 3. I am looking forward to seeing and reading Bruce's book. We have a close association geographically with Tawa and their history is ours too. For years we have depended on the classic work *Tawa Flat and the Old Porirua Road 1840–1970* by the well-known author, and friend of OHS, Arthur Carmen (a copy is in our library) for Old Porirua Road information. This, alongside our own published works in various editions of *The Onslow Historian*, provided the history. Bruce's new book (and others to his credit that we can hear about) takes us another step along the way to understanding more about our past. There is always something new to learn.

We look forward to seeing you on the Wednesday 26 May 2021.

Judy Siers
President

OHS Events: May–December 2021

Wednesday 26 May 2021

AGM followed by a presentation from Bruce Murray, Chair of the Tawa Historical Society and author of a new book *The History of the Old Porirua Road*.

K.A.T.E. ■ 7.30pm for 7.45pm

Sunday 4 July 2021

Silent Movie Screening with piano accompaniment by David Beattie. David is working on a new programme suitable for 4 July and this is looking very exciting. There will be two short films and then a longer classic, probably the 1925 version of *The Phantom of the Opera*. More about this in the next newsletter.

2pm–4pm ■ at David's home, Khandallah, seating is limited to 25.

Wednesday 11 August 2021

An evening with Elizabeth Kay – historian and author of the book *Eddie Norman and 25 Battalion*.

Eddie Norman was Elizabeth's father. After the war he became the Anglican Bishop of Wellington. Many will remember Elizabeth and her long service as President of the Friends of Te Papa.

K.A.T.E. ■ 7.30pm for 7.45pm

Sunday 19 September 2021

Following the successful afternoon event held last month, and members' requests that we do this again here is:

An afternoon with Wellington authors and historians Julia Millen and Anne Manchester.

K.A.T.E. ■ 2.30pm–4.30pm

Wednesday 27 October 2021

Launching *The Onslow Historian 2021* – Khandallah Park Stories. A Wellington Heritage Week event.

K.A.T.E. ■ 7.30pm for 7.45pm

Christmas Party 2021

Friday 3 December at K.A.T.E. ■ 6pm–8pm

86 Khandallah Road, Wellington

email: onslowhistorical@gmail.com

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Notice of our Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 26 May 2021 at K.A.T.E. 7.30 for 7.45pm

Apologies to: onslowhistorical@gmail.com

AGENDA

- Welcome
- Apologies
- Minutes of the 2020 AGM and matters arising
- President's report
- Treasurer's Report
- Election of Officers
- General Business
- Guest Speaker: Bruce Murray

An Invitation

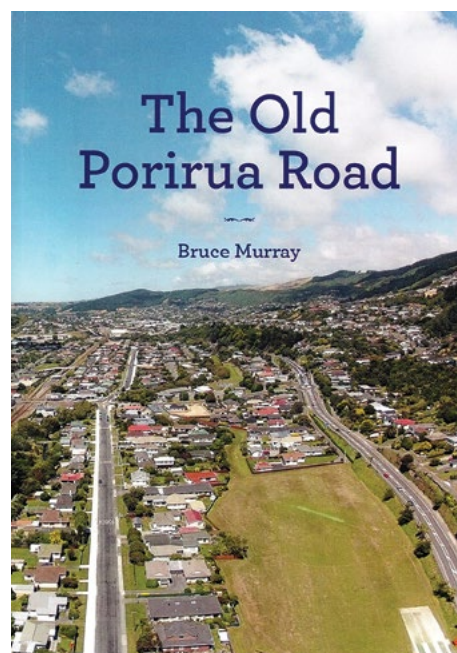
Following the AGM you are invited to meet Bruce Murray and hear him speak about his new book *The Old Porirua Road*.

Bruce has been a resident in Tawa since 1964 and has had a lifetime career in education. He is best known locally for the years he was a teacher at Tawa College, 1966 to 1977, and Principal from 1989, retiring in 2002. He became the President of the Tawa Historical Society in 2001 and still holds this position. He has been very active in publishing numerous titles of Tawa's history which we can hear more about during the evening.

The Old Porirua Road, A4, 84 pages including maps, photographs and illustrations, published by the Tawa Historical Society.

Books will be available to browse or buy, \$20.00, so bring cash or discuss internet banking with Bruce on the night.

Supper will be served.



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An extract from *The Old Porirua Road*.

The Porirua Road - SH1 of its day.

The Porirua Road was the main route north from the early 1840s. Starting from Kaiwharawhara village on Te Whanganui-a-Tara's edge, the route took a winding route up the Ngaio Gorge to the old K-surface of Wellington. Here the uplifted flatter surface allowed for the easier development of roads like Cockayne Road, Box Hill and Burma Road, all formerly and collectively known as 'the Porirua Road'. Fraser Avenue, also a significant part of the Porirua Road, and Johnsonville Road led to the narrow valley containing Middleton Road and Willowbank Road, which led to the broader valley in which Tawa (Flat) lies. So between Kaiwharawhara and Tawa, the old Porirua is still relatively easy to trace.

It is within Tawa that the old Porirua Road is now much more difficult to find. This is largely because the Road initially was built close to the old Moari trail from Porirua harbour to Wellington's harbour, which in turn was close to the Kenepuru/Porirua Stream. However, this meandering stream, and the removal of the forest cover, quickly led to flooding, and a need to move the Porirua Road westward to higher ground. Well over half of today's Main Road in Tawa lies to the west of the old Porirua Road.



Tawa Flat (corner of the Main Road and today's Oxford Street, formerly the Old Porirua Road) in 1930. Mexted's Garage on the left; the Tawa Flat Store on the right.



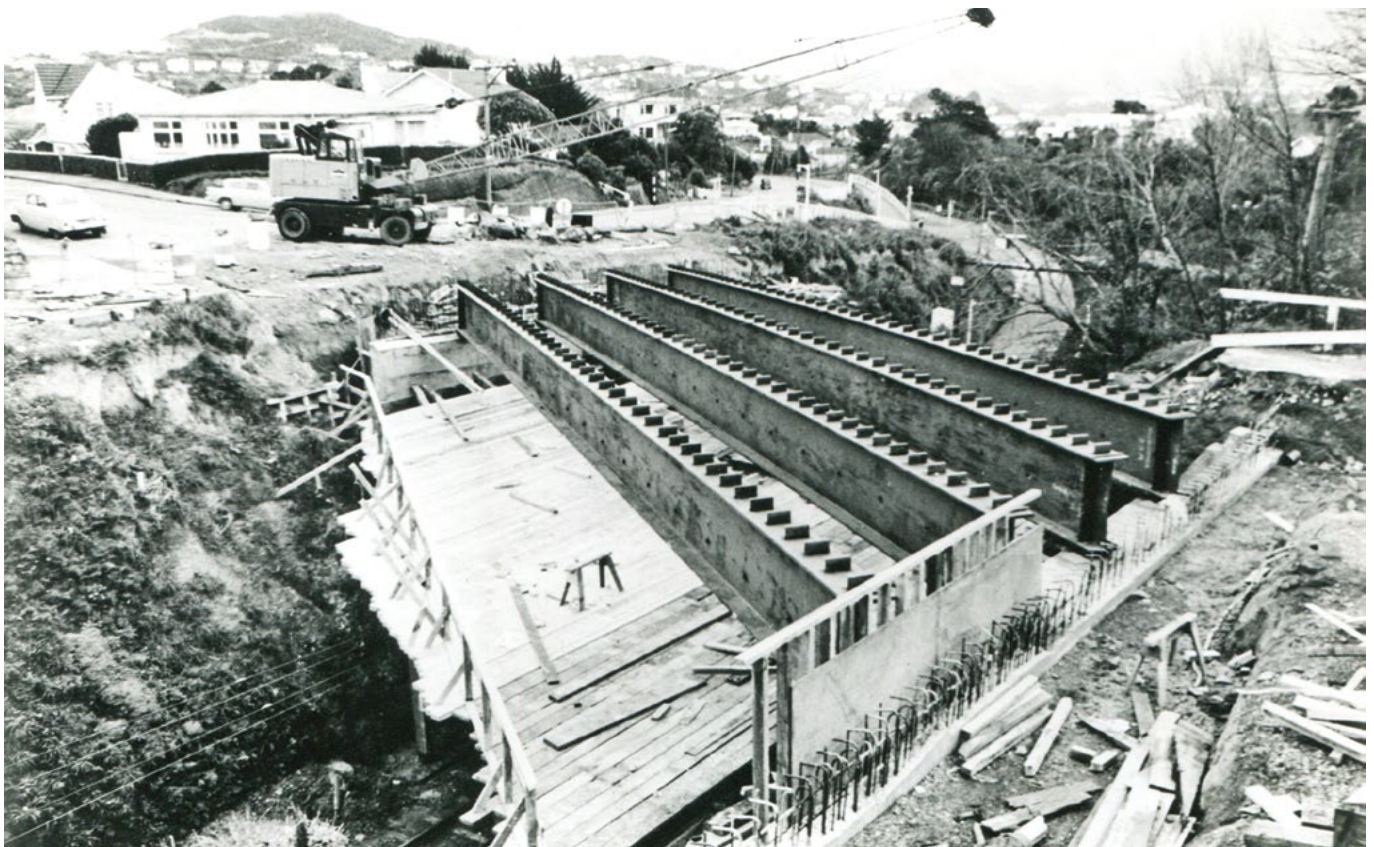
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From The Archives

The new Boxhill Bridge under construction 1968

This action-packed photograph taken from the Boxhill side of the future bridge appeared in the *Evening Post* on 25 June 1968 with the following commentary:

The 4 main steel-encased beams which will carry the new Boxhill Bridge in Khandallah have been located in position across the railway gap. According to the Assistant City Engineer, Mr A.D. Martin the project is proceeding according to schedule. R.J. MEYER COLLECTION



A snippet from the past

The Evening Post.

An *Evening Post* article in 1913 reported after an Onslow Borough Council meeting as follows:
Councillor Bowden spoke in favour of a bathing shed and he said, truly representative of a responsible Onslow Warder, that

"... he did not believe in scattering ratepayers' money with the first southerly that blew, but considered that a bathing shed at Kaiwarra could prove a very great convenience."

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Richard Potts' Travel Invitation



Members will remember Richard who has transported us on most of our out-of-town trips over

several decades. Most recently, and closer to home, he drove us to Christ Church at Taita and onto the Hutt Valley Centre for the Riding for the Disabled for lunch – a truly memorable day.

Richard has put together a new tour that includes New Zealand history and places of interest that are a 'bit off the beaten track'.

Read the following and see if it suits you for a short holiday. Richard is presenting this opportunity to OHS members directly. It is quite separate from our event calendar, but we are pleased to advise you of the offer and feel sure there will be good response, and in good company you can expect a 'good time'!

Happy travel!

Classic Coaches TRAVEL CLUB

Tawhiti Museum, Pioneer Village, Forgotten World Highway and Whangamomona Village, travelling to Eastern Taranaki and the Ruapehu Districts.

Sunday 3 to Tuesday 5 October, and Sunday 17 to Tuesday 19 October 2021



This three-day heritage tour is planned to run from Sunday 3 October until Tuesday 5 October

and again on 17 to 19 October 2021. The modern air-conditioned Rosa bus will be driven by Richard Potts, the owner and tour guide, and there are a limited number of places available. We restrict the numbers of travellers to ensure a small group, although a 24-seat modern midsize comfortable vehicle is used. Should you wish to come or have any friends that may be interested in joining, please let them know, and inform me asap, so that I can confirm accommodation, which has been provisionally booked, before the rates increase.

I have run four of the above tours that have all been sold out, and members of the groups have provided very positive comments about



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the experience, accommodation, bus travel and interesting places they visited that they hadn't known existed.

The total price will be \$530.00, which includes twin-share accommodation of a high standard at the modern Amity Motel in Stratford on the Sunday evening and The Chateau Tongariro on Monday. Breakfast at the Chateau will also be included in this price along with an entry to Tawhiti Museum and Pioneer Village. Your investment will also include the guided tour by modern bus over this forgotten historic part of New Zealand. I have tried to keep the cost as low as possible to enable you to join and experience this wonderful part of the country, unknown to many people.

On Sunday we visit Tawhiti Museum, acclaimed as the best private museum in the country. On Monday, when we travel the Forgotten World Highway, we visit areas and places that have experienced a population decline, and where people do not normally visit due to the location and isolation. There is much history in the area, and superb scenery, including the spectacular Tangarakau Gorge, with cliffs and native bush. We cross 4 saddles and pass through historic Moki Tunnel built in 1936. When we visit Whangamomona you

will be able to purchase a passport to this Republic, which was formed in 1989, and learn about the early days of the 20th century.

On the third day we visit Mt Ruapehu, where you can travel in the new Sky Waka up the side of mountain, up to 2020 metres above sea level, usually covered with snow in winter. These are enclosed from the weather and are not yet two years of age. Great views from the top.

An option of a single room is available along with door-to-door pick-up/return home after the tour.

To confirm your place, please direct credit \$100.00 to Classic Coaches Account:
031535-0071811-00

Should you have any questions, or concerns, please phone me.

I hope you are able to join us on this amazing trip.

Regards

Richard Potts

Classic Coaches

5 Star Safety Rating as issued by LTNZ

Coach Owner Driver / Tour Guide

Phone 564 5015