



ONslow HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Established 1968

Newsletter

July 2020

Dear Members of OHS

It is three months since our last Newsletter but it feels much longer than that. So much has happened and many lives have changed dramatically. I know we all feel pretty proud of NZ's response to the Lockdown, making our communities as safe as possible, and of the extra effort made to be kind to each other. Covid-19 is a milestone in our history we will never forget!

The Committee send best wishes to you all and we are looking forward to renewing our activities. There is a good deal of catch-up due.

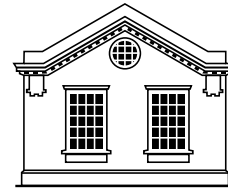
Our first event is our AGM and details are printed opposite. We hope to see a good turnout for this important annual meeting, scheduled a little later than originally intended for the obvious reasons. Following the advice of the Charities Commission we cancelled the date in concern of health and safety.

The programme for the rest of the year will be signed off by the new Committee after the elections at the AGM and a further Newsletter will be issued soon after. Meantime if any member is interested in working for OHS, either as a new Committee member, a co-opted member, or on any heritage project or suggested contribution, please ring and discuss this with me at (04) 934 6334; don't hesitate, it would be good to hear from you.

Meantime here are a few items of interest collected over the last few months.

Best wishes,

Judy Siers



An Invitation

Onslow Historical Society Annual General Meeting 2020

Monday 27 July

7.30 for a 7.45 start

At KATE, 86 Khandallah Road

Wellington

Acceptances and apologies are welcomed
email onslowhistorical@gmail.com

The business of the meeting and the election of office holders for the forthcoming year will be followed by a presentation by Paul Wilson.

"A Twist in the Tail (Huia)", the story of a recently extinct bird that once flourished in the region, and Huia, son of Lord and Lady Onslow, who was born in New Zealand at the time Lord Onslow was Governor of New Zealand.



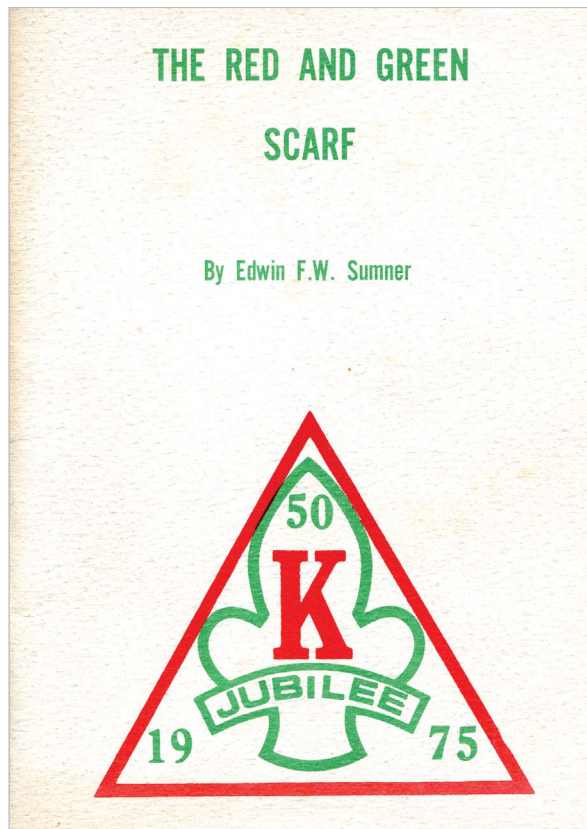
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A Scout Enquiry

Recently a researcher called into KATE for help re the history of the Khandallah Scouts. We checked our *Onslow Historian* index and the archives, and then our heritage booklet collection. It was in the latter that we found *The Red and Green Scarf, A history of the Khandallah Scout Group Wellington NZ 1911-1975*, published on the occasion of the 50th Jubilee celebrations.

This provided the information required. The booklet is long out of print and considered a rare publication. Produced in 1975, by Edwin F.W. Sumner, it has a Foreword compiled by Governor General, Lord Cobham who wrote *"It gives me great pleasure to write a little foreword to your history of the Khandallah Scout Group, more particularly because I had the honour of being present at the Dedication Ceremony of your new hall in 1960."*

The are 18 pages of lists of names of those who served Khandallah Scouts from 1911-970. This includes Officers, Chairmen, Secretaries, Treasurers



FOREWORD

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It gives me great pleasure to write a little foreword to your history of the Khandallah Scout Group, more particularly because I had the honour of being present at the Dedication Ceremony of your new hall in 1960.

Scouting is one of the good immutable things left in a world which has lost its way. Founded on faith, dedicated to service and linked in brotherhood, it scorns the false prophets of a civilization mainly conscious only of its rights and heedless of its duties.

The seas of change may erode the cliffs against which they beat, but there will always be a few indestructible rocks. And they will still be there at the end.

"Sire" said Theodore Beza to King Henry of Navarre, "it belongs to the Church of God, in whose name I speak, to endure blows and not to inflict them. But may it please Your Majesty to remember that the Church is an anvil that has worn out many hammers."

May the Scout Group of Khandallah go forward as bravely in the future as they have in the past.

and Committee Members, also King's and Queen's Scouts and the recipients of awards, thanks badges and trophies. It's a great collection of names of Khandallah residents.

Members and friends are invited to call into KATE any Sunday afternoon if you would like to read this booklet.

As well, you will find an interesting article in the *Onslow Historian* volume 5 No 4 1975.

It is titled "Khandallah Scouts 1911-1921" by Len Tompsett and includes a photograph of the first Khandallah Scout Troup 1911.



Who remembers Sid Odell?

I was asked this question some months ago and although I remembered the name I could not supply any information about him. Our archives could not deliver. I asked the Ngaio Progressive Ass and there was no recall. Then, by coincidence, I found this newspaper clipping when I was searching for something entirely different. As soon as I read about the annual collection of rubbish in Ngaio in the 1960s and 1970s I was reminded of him and the other roles he played in the community. It is so easy to forget

people who have contributed to our suburbs and the city, but we can fix this situation here with this facsimile of the newspaper clipping.

I am sure there will be many responses. Note that Sid was a former President of the Ngaio Progressive Association and one of the founders of the Ngaio Tennis Club. We cannot forget him since Odell's Reserve is a prominent reserve much used and maintained by the WCC, but now we can add some biography to the man himself.



Ngaio loses stalwart

Former long time president of the Ngaio Progressive Association and pillar of the community Robert Sidney (Sid) Odell died last week in Taupo aged 84.

Mr Odell was an active member in the suburb during the 1950s and 60s, overseeing many beautification projects.

He was also instrumental in founding the Ngaio Tennis Club and was made the club's patron.

A reserve in Punjab St was named Odell Heights in recognition of his out-

standing contribution to the suburb.

The late Lord Bledisloe maintained the view from the site was the finest in Wellington.

Mr Odell, who was general manager of the former Tourist and Publicity Department during the 1960s, was an early environmentalist.

One of his major achievements was organising a yearly rubbish drive to clear refuse for residents who couldn't make it to the tip.

Mr Odell was also the driving force behind a large

scale tree planting in the Khandallah Reservoir area and along the railway line through Ngaio.

Former Ngaio residents remember Mr Odell as a man of vision who had a very direct approach to improving the environs of Ngaio.

"He was a fairly quiet fellow but he had foresight and initiative," Eric Hardy-Jones says.

He is survived by his wife Flora, a former teacher at Ngaio School, and three children Malcolm, Diana and Michael.



The Ames Arms Hotel

Sue Schreuder and Julie Bremner

In the early days of settlement, in a bush clearing on the Porirua Road near the present Johnsonville roundabout, stood the Ames Accommodation House, later known as the Ames Arms Hotel. The licensee who gave her name to it had a colourful background – Mary Anne Ames née Hull was neither colonist with family funds to invest, nor assisted New Zealand Company artisan-migrant. She had come from Sydney where her mother Judith Caffrey had been transported in 1814 from Dublin in Ireland on a convict ship bound for Botany Bay. Records are lost as to which law she had broken. Her sentence was seven years.

[There is a possibility that the same fate might also have befallen Mary Anne's father, James Hull, transported to Van Dieman's Land for stealing a potato!]

In 1838 in Sydney 21-year-old Mary Anne married Captain James Ames. Their first baby, a son George, was born that year, and a second son James in 1840. Captain Ames had a colourful career, but where he came from is quite unknown. He ran away to sea as a lad and it is possible that he came from a large family of 12 children in Newgate near St Albans and Sandridge in Hertfordshire. He was Chief Mate on *Caroline* in 1838 when the captain (Cherry) was killed on the mainland opposite Mana Island by a Maori who coveted his suit! James Ames had spent the 1830s trading between Sydney and New Zealand, one of his ships the schooner *Emma Jane*, and in 1841 chose to settle in New Zealand with his young family.

He established a whaling station on the small island south of Kapiti Island, Tokamapuna, bringing men, boats and provisions from Sydney. One day when he was away at sea, Mary Anne had a visit from Te Rauparaha! To hide her terror she welcomed him and staunchly invited him to dine which he did, and he is reported to have said, "Woman, we came to kill, but you are too brave", and left her in peace on her island thereafter. The Ameses' daughter Emma was born on the island in 1842, one of the first white children to be christened by the Rev Hadfield, the famous missionary at Waikanae.

The following year they moved to Kaikoura establishing another whaling station at Goose Bay where James's successes were published in the lists of whales killed and whale oil measured in tons. But it was a hard life and James later became temporary pilot in Wellington Harbour and host of the Rose Inn at Lower Hutt.

By 1850, the year he died at the age of 43, he had the South Sea Hotel on Lambton Quay for which his licence fee was £40. The hotel had been built of bricks and had collapsed in the 1848 earthquake, but must have been repaired as that was where he died, not at sea in his dangerous whaling/trading life, but simply of the old fashioned chest illness, the Quincey. He is buried in Bolton Street Cemetery.

His widow Mary Anne was still living at the South Sea Hotel in 1853 with her five children but the following year she bought the Ames Arms in Johnsonville from another early settler George Mexted for £170, and there she stayed for the next five years. At the Ames Arms in 1856 she



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was married again – to George Ashdown. The marriage was short lived as George suffered an aneurism two years later, leaving Mary Anne well provided for – with money and the hotel and its 10 acres left to her together with another hotel, the Coach & Horses in Wellington, both properties to be handed on to her children when she died. She left Johnsonville and moved back to Wellington using her Ames surname again after George Ashdown died, and survived another 29 years; “a fit woman to be an early settler’s wife, full of untiring energy, blessed with splendid health, and always carrying a high and cheerful heart, she overcame all difficulties”.

James Bryant was the new licensee of the Ames Arms in 1859, advertising beer at fourpence, rum at 5 shillings a bottle, whisky 6 shillings a bottle, meals for one shilling and sixpence, and stabling for a shilling. And the *Almanack* tracks the future owners of Onslow’s “local”, gradually upgrading its description:

In 1863 – “Ames’ Hotel, Porirua Road, William Reeve proprietor – choice spirits, superior wines, bright ales, bottled stout, good beds for travellers, comfortable stables for horses and well fenced paddocks for cattle etc.”

In 1869 – “Ames’ Hotel, Johnsonville. Six miles from town, wines, spirits, and malt liquors of the best quality. Excellent table, well aired beds, good paddocks and stabling.”

In 1873 – “Ames’ Hotel, Johnsonville, F Taylor proprietor. F T takes this opportunity of thanking his friends and the general public for their liberal patronage since he has taken the above well-known Hotel, and assures them that nothing shall be wanting on his part to ensure a continuance of the same – wines, spirits, & malt liquors, best brands, always on hand, good stabling & well fenced paddocks.”

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