

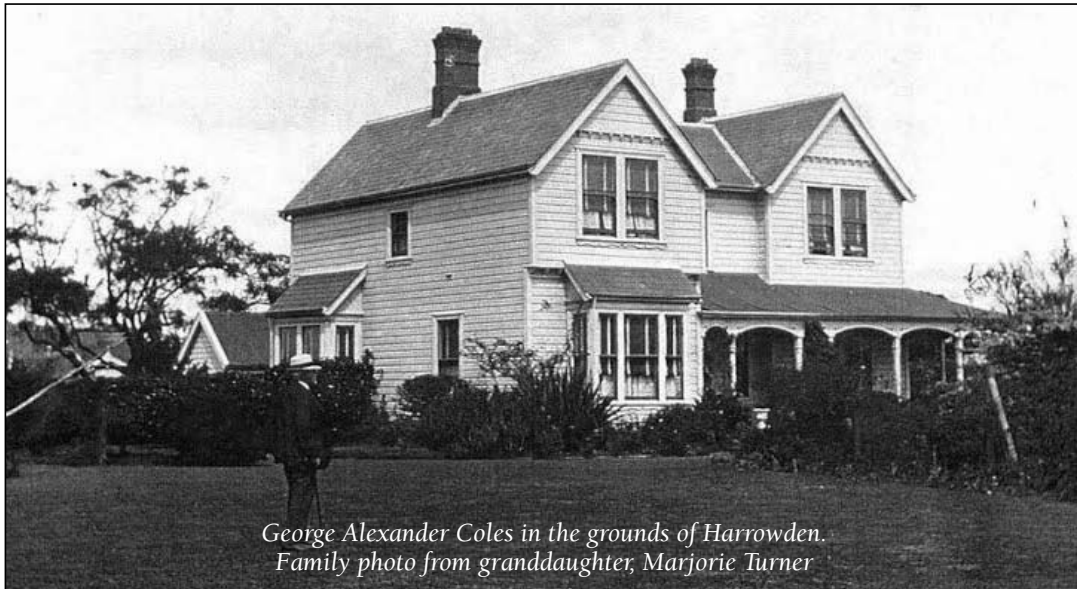


MOUNT ALBERT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Harrowden House - 53 Taylors Road, Mt Albert



*George Alexander Coles in the grounds of Harrowden.
Family photo from granddaughter, Marjorie Turner*

When Allan Kerr Taylor's brother, George Chambers Taylor died in Whangarei in 1882, his wife Catherine Taylor with her nine children relocated to Mt Albert to be near her brother in law. On the 13th February 1886 she purchased three acres in Taylors Road from Allan Kerr Taylor for the sum of seven hundred and fifty pounds.

It is believed because she paid so much for the land that the house was already there. Catherine's family became the Chambers-Taylor family whilst the others became Kerr Taylor to avoid mail problems.

Catherine Taylor sold the property in 1903 to Mary Ann Coles, wife of George Alexander Coles (grandparents of MAHS member Marjorie Turner nee Coles.)

George Coles arrived in New Zealand in 1882 and started a footwear manufacturing company at 29 Exmouth Street in Eden Terrace, Auckland. The family had a shop which they lived above on the corner of Exmouth Street and New North Road. It was here in 1896, that Marjorie Turner's father Charles, a 14 year old pupil at Auckland Grammar School would do his homework at the shop counter whilst his mother prepared the family dinner. 1) Recollections of Marjorie Turner

Mary Ann Coles came from Little Harrowden in Northamptonshire, England where the Coles family were already boot (footwear) manufacturers. As a result 53 Taylors Road was named Harrowden. George died in 1936 and MaryAnn in 1939.

During the war years the property was leased to a NZ Army unit. Marjorie Turner believes the home housed an anti aircraft battery. During their tenure the army installed electric lights and drainage as prior to this there had been no

drainage and the lighting had been gaslight.

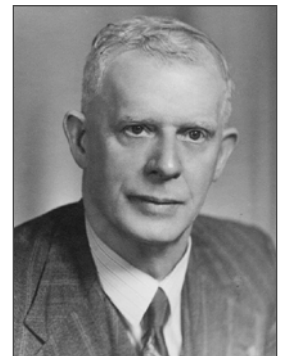
After the war Mt Albert Grammar school house (located on what is now Alice Wylie Reserve on the corner of New North Road and Burch Street) was too small to accommodate all the boys who required boarding so some were sent to board at private dwellings, one of which was Harrowden. (In 1948 eighty two pupils were boarding at Mt Albert Grammar School hostel and 51 in private dwellings.) 2) 1949 NZ Education Primary and Post Primary Education page 50

As you entered the Harrowden property from the Taylors Road side (the main entry in those days being from Sainsbury Road) there was on the left, parallel to Taylors Road, a large barn which in the 1950's was given to the Anglican Church in Sandringham.

During the 1940's the family started dividing the land and selling off sections and by the 1960's Harrowden was empty and the decision was made to sell.



George Alexander Coles



*Charles Willis Coles
supplied by his daughter M Turner*

Lois Girven (nee Postlewaight)

shares her recollections of living at 53 Taylors Road, Mt Albert.

In the mid 1940s Lois, her parents Lewis and Thelma Postlewaight, and her older sister Alma, lived for approximately 18 months at 53 Taylors Road, while her parents were managing the property as a boarding house.

Lois recalled they had several couples staying with them and their board would include breakfast and an evening meal. Her mother, Thelma, shouldered the responsibility for running the boarding house and her sister Alma, helped out with the chores. Her father, Lewis, continued working driving taxis.

Access to the property was via Taylors Road, however you could also drive out via Sainsbury Road. On the ground level of the house there was a very large lounge room, complete with full size billiard table, for the guests to use. Lewis and Thelma's bedroom was also downstairs. The dining room on the ground floor had French doors which led out to a verandah area. Upstairs there were an additional three rooms that were let and there was a huge bathroom and a toilet. Another smaller bedroom accommodated her sister Alma. There was a large building at the rear of the house.

In the front of the house, looking out over Sainsbury Road, there was a rockery garden with paths and a seat, and the guests would walk there in the evenings. It was likely this part of the garden had been developed by the George Alexander Coles family.

Lois also recalled that they kept chickens and a cow at the property. There was an occasion when Missie the cow clambered over the low stone wall and went off wandering in the neighbourhood. Lewis Postlewaight was not amused to have to go and retrieve the cow from

the pound and walk her home again.

The kitchen had a full coal range plus an electric stove. The cow's milk was placed on the coal range after milking and the cream was skimmed off and used to make butter. Wooden butter pats were used to roll the butter into rounds for the guests to use. Lois' job was to set the tables for the evening meal, serve the guests in the dining room and to clear the tables and help with the dishes.

Lois attended Balmoral Intermediate when the family lived in Taylors Road, and would ride her bike to school everyday, going in the opposite direction of all the boys cycling to Mt Albert Grammar School.

During the time the family lived in Taylors Road, Alma got married to Jack Kerr. Below is a photo of the girls with their parents, taken in the house on the day of the wedding.

Some years earlier, Lois and her family lived at 151 Mt Albert Road (where the Burger Queen shop is today) and her parents ran a small grocery store there. Lois attended Owairaka Primary School and remembers the school milk supply (not fondly!) and the boys from the Boys Home in Owairaka Avenue who also attended school there. The boys had a particular uniform they had to wear to school. She also recalled air raid practices whilst at school.

During this time, Lois' father was in the Home Guard and she recalls Sunday morning fitness assemblies for the men, in their uniforms. When her father was conscripted to work in the wool store down at the wharf, Lois' mother Thelma, ran the shop.



Postlewaight family L-R: Lewis, Joan, Alma, Lois and Thelma.
Photo courtesy of Lois Girven.

M.A.H.S Dates To Remember

February 21, 2015 (Saturday) 2pm. Ferndale House, Mt Albert.

John Clark Born in the UK and followed in father's footsteps to become a trooper dutyman in the mounted squadron of the Lifeguards Regiment Household Cavalry. He was mounted guard at Whitehall (in full regalia) on a regular basis as well as being part of trooping the colour, state opening of Parliament and escorting overseas dignitaries. A very entertaining speaker recounting his years in this service. \$2.00 entry. All welcome.

March 21 2015 (Saturday) 2pm. (Rain date Sunday 22 March 2pm)

A picnic on the summit of Mt Albert. An ideal opportunity to spend quality time reminiscing with fellow members. Michael Basset will recall some of his memories of growing up on or around the mountain. Debbie Dunsford, our book author will join Michael to give an update on her current research into the very early years in this area. We hope you will also have some memories to share.

Please bring your own refreshments and seating if required.

April 15, 2015 (Wednesday) 10.30am. 18 Mt Albert Road.

150th anniversary of the building of the Phillips' house, (heritage listed by Auckland Council) and currently owned by MAHS member Richie Afford.

We invite you to participate in a celebration of Richie Afford's home. There will be a Devonshire morning tea and a guided tour by Richie of the house and grounds. For catering purposes, please RSVP to Mary Inomata on 846 4509 by Friday 10th April 2015. No charge. MAHS members only.

Apology: The front page article "An Enduring Memorial" in newsletter No 28, Oct 2014 was supplied to us by Mr Ian McLean. Our apologies to Mr McLean for omitting his name.

Life Membership Awarded

Richie Afford was presented with a certificate of Life Membership at the MAHS Christmas function, held on November 29th 2014. Richie was a member of the inaugural MAHS committee in 2006 and generously donated a significant amount of funding to assist the society in setting up. He continues to be a strong and active supporter of MAHS.

We congratulate Richie on being a well deserved recipient of our first Life Membership award.



Richie Afford holding his life membership certificate
MAHS photo

News from the Past...

G.A COLES & CO LIMITED

It is probable that only those closely associated with the boot and shoe trade appreciate the remarkable growth in recent years in the manufacture of New Zealand footwear. Few people indeed realise the importance of Auckland as a manufacturing centre for footwear. A result which has been primarily brought about through the initiative and progressive policy of one firm, that of Messrs G.A. Coles and Company Ltd. This live concern has been in continuous operation for 38 years and today ranks as one of the largest and best equipped boot manufacturing institutions in the Dominion. The firm was founded in 1885 by Mr George Alexander Coles who for long has been the senior partner and managing director of the concern. Till now the factory is the largest and best equipped factory in the North Island of the Dominion, employing a very large number of hands and turning out thousands of pairs of boots and shoes every year. Possessing such an extensive and practical knowledge of the trade, Mr Cole has done more than any other maker to improve the status of the boot trade in Auckland and has ably demonstrated what an Auckland workman can do. It is eloquently apparent that this knowledge, and particularly the accurate study made by the firm (of local and Dominion needs), has kept the concern going when others were compelled to retire. It is of interest to note that Mr G A Coles has associated with him in the management of the concern his two sons, C.W. Coles being secretary of the company and Mr G.E Coles factory manager.

Excerpts from NZ Herald November 13, 1923

Mt Albert Primary School in the 1940's

Primary School Memories By Glennys McGlashan

I attended Mt Albert Primary School from 1945 to 1951. I had strict but good teachers and I have many happy memories of my primary school days. I travelled to school on the tram car with my father who owned a menswear shop in lower Queen Street. He made sure that I disembarked the tram at the school stop and I enjoyed this special time with my father each morning.

I usually took a cut lunch from home consisting of two sandwiches, a piece of cake that my mother had made and a piece of fruit. Sometimes I was allowed to have the treat of buying my lunch. As there was no lunch bar (tuck shop as they were called in those days) at the school, students were permitted to sprint up the road to the St Lukes Shops to buy some lunch. I do not mean the St Lukes Shopping Mall as that did not exist until the 1970's. There were six shops at the junction of New North Road and St Lukes Road. At the dairy we could buy a delicious hot meat pie and a donut covered in icing sugar and filled with raspberry jam and cream. We would wait patiently at the fish and chip shop for a sixpenny newspaper parcel of hot chips or buy tuppence worth of pork luncheon sausage at the small grocery store. On one occasion I had taken my lunch from home wrapped in greaseproof paper and then placed in a brown paper bag. (Plastic wrap had not been invented). My brother, who was eight years older than me, arrived on his bicycle. Apparently I had taken a paper bag with a dozen raw eggs inside instead

of my lunch!! Luckily the eggs were still intact and were duly exchanged for my lunch.

In Standard Two (Year 4), I had a teacher called Miss Wolf. There were over 40 children in the class. Miss Wolf was a tall, slim, blonde and she usually wore a pleated skirt and a cardigan, with nylon stockings and high heeled shoes. Her hair was rolled at the nape of her neck which was the fashion in the 1940s. She was kind and sympathetic, and became my favourite teacher.

Miss Wolf had a mobile blackboard on a large easel to one side at the front of the classroom. Anyone caught talking out of turn or misbehaving was told to stand behind the blackboard and wait until Miss Wolf would deal with them at the next break. It was terrifying for the students to see a pair of little legs beneath the edge of the board waiting for punishment. In fact one day a little girl was so scared that a stream was seen trickling between her shoes as she stood behind the board. No one dared to laugh but we all felt very great sympathy for her.

A highlight was the annual school fair to raise funds for the school. One year I was to be part of the demonstration of folk dancing but I didn't like holding boys' hands in those days and hid behind a tree and refused to take part!! I loved the sports days, playing basketball on the asphalt courts especially when we had oranges cut into pieces at half time.



*Mt Albert Primary School Standard 2 1949
Glennys 2nd row from top and 3rd from right*