



MOUNT ALBERT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Rahiri House - the Caughey family home



*Garden Party at Rahiri House for the YMCA 1912.
MAHS collection*

Andrew Clarke Caughey was born in Ulster, Ireland in 1849. He arrived in New Zealand in 1879 and eventually joined his sister Marianne and brother in law William in the drapery business of Smith and Caughey. Andrew married Lucy Reagen in 1886 and in 1888 he purchased three plots of land (four acres) from Edward Allen's subdivided farm which ran along Murdoch Road (now McLean Street since 1938, but cleverly still kept the name of the Mayor it honoured, Murdoch McLean).

A fine kauri house was quickly built with an expansive garden and orchard and in 1900 an additional two storeys were added to the original giving the family an amazing view of the Waitemata Harbour from the balcony. The house was named Rahiri (Warm welcome) and indeed it was, as Andrew a one time Methodist pastor, had a deserved reputation for being the epitome of generosity. Andrew's life values are inscribed upon three sides of the beautiful carved balustrade at the front of the stairs. One is of the Bible, one of the Christian cross and one indicating his Irish heritage of an Irish harp. As the seven Caughey children grew they played in the shadow of the fairytale turret, sneaked apples from the orchard and eventually reached adulthood and moved further afield. Andrew and his wife Lucy seized the opportunity to meet a growing need and in 1923 gifted what became known as Caughey House and two acres of land to the newly formed Plunket Society, to become a Karitane Hospital. At last Auckland had its first long term Karitane hospital for expectant mothers and babies. Karitane added a one

story building which became the Mothercare Unit. With accommodation for eight mothers, thirty five babies and a host of nurses the old house suddenly saw action like never before.

The late 70's saw a movement away from hospital based maternity care and thus it was that in 1979 the Caughey House property was purchased by the Hebron Christian College who have lived up to the legacy of the Caughey family and Plunket by sowing positive values back into the community.¹

Hebron Christian College have always wanted to restore the prominent "feature rooms" in Rahiri such as those which have impressive plaster work; the ornate siding and immaculate floor of the ballroom; the remarkable kauri staircase and carved balustrades and the graceful drawing room, but lack of finances have held them back. In this day and age of pulling down heritage buildings that tell our story, and calling it progress and a necessary evil, it is encouraging to hear that here at least a building is truly valued. We hope they are able to realise their dream as from family home to fairytale mansion, maternity hospital to playground sentinel, Rahiri House has survived because generations have taken it to heart and loved it as their own.

Editors note: Hebron Christian College is happy to hire out the ballroom and its kitchen on Friday evenings / Saturday afternoons / evenings. For details contact the Principal Mr Geoff Matthews ph 846 2159.

¹ Rahiri House restoration 2005

Have you ever wondered how Karitane Hospitals got their name? As babies under the age of two were not admitted to general hospitals, Dr Frederic Truby King founded a baby hospital at his holiday home on the Karitane Peninsula – hence the name.

There was much public confusion about the respective functions of Plunket and Karitane nurses.

Plunket had to be registered nurses or midwives (preferably both).

Karitane nurses were trained in any of the Karitane Hospitals after which they qualified to work as baby nurses in private homes. In the late 1930's it was impossible to meet all the requests for Karitane nurses.

Lorraine Paterson was born in Mt Albert and trained as a Karitane nurse at the Karitane Hospital in Mt Albert (previously Caughey family home and currently part of Hebron Christian College). She shares her memories with us below.



Lorraine Robinson with one of her charges at Karitane Hospital 1953



1953 Karitane nurses on front steps of the hospital with Lady Norrie, Dr Bush and Sister Collins

My memories of Mt Albert by Lorraine Paterson (Lack) nee Robinson

I was born in 1934 at our home which stood on the corner of Mt Royal Avenue and Ruarangi Road as was my brother Bob seven years earlier. Both of us had Nurse Currie as the midwife. We shifted to Mission Bay in 1939 but I was to return to Mt Albert thirteen years later to do my Karitane training in the hospital on the corner of Allendale Road and McLean Street. It is nice to see the old original building still standing and what was the mother craft section. The building in the middle wasn't there then but big beautiful trees.

There was an old house down by the gate where eight nurses lived and a Sister Goodin to keep an eye on us. In the centre leading to the hospital was a huge vegetable garden and the drive on either side. In the middle of winter especially at 4 or 5am it could be a cold dark walk to the hospital and worse for dispensary or three hourly feed nurses an hour or two earlier. When you first started you got all the menial tasks like scrubbing the three and four hour nurseries and the nappy job. Later you got the job of washing and ironing the "party clothes" the babies were changed into for afternoons and visiting days. Two of us were on that duty. Next came being a helper for the dispensary nurse washing lots of jugs, pots etc for making milk mixtures, in between learning in the prem and weakling wards. Sister Douglas was our teacher there. If we had been to a party or ball we'd bring our partners in to see the tiny babies through the glass window in the hall. I wonder if the sisters ever knew?

Each morning there was "poo party" when nurses on duty learned about soiled nappy contents. Not our favourite lesson – and each napkin had to be named. In summer on nice mornings the babies were moved outside for morning sleep. One nurse did the trip to the Mt Albert shops with a lucky baby in a pram to buy any requirements. One sister always got packham pears – I still think of her when I see them. Near the end of your training there was an exam. Like all exams you are pleased when you get the results and you are through.

The Mothercraft home was for new mothers, also for establishing breastfeeding and help. The Sister there was such a nice gentle lady - perfect for there. The matron was Matron Boyce. It was a period in my life which I really enjoyed and made friends for life. I enjoyed the casing – going to a home with a new baby. After marriage I worked in a maternity hospital until having my own baby.

Editors Note: In a nice human touch Geoffrey Matthews Principal of Hebron College, his twin sister and brother were born and raised in Mt Albert. On visiting Hebron in 1991 Geoffrey's mother mentioned that he and his twin sister, as babies, had spent a week in the Mothercraft Unit and was able to go to the classroom and point where their cots had been.

M.A.H.S Dates To Remember

March 04, 2017 (Sunday) 2pm. Alice Wylie Reserve, New North Road, Mt Albert.

The weather should be great for a **BYO picnic for members at Alice Wylie Reserve**. Alice Wylie and others will talk about the reserve and its history and there will be the opportunity for you to reminisce as well. Members only.

May 03, 2017 (Wednesday) 10.30am. Ferndale House, 840 New North Road, Mt Albert.

Ted Dickens retired Farmers Trading Company employee of 30 years, gives us an account of his life at Farmers working his way up through all the departments. \$2 entry. Open to all. Refreshments.

MAHS pre Christmas tea party at Ferndale House

At 2.30pm on Sunday 20 November, our final function for 2016 was an afternoon tea party for members at Ferndale House. Fifty members attended and were entertained throughout the function by Kim Naden playing old classics suitable for “tea music” on the piano.

The food was excellent, the tea and coffee refreshing and a mood of relaxation and enjoyment permeated the gathering. All agreed it was a lovely afternoon and is certainly on our list of repeats.



MAHS members enjoying themselves



A laden teaplate of delicacies

100 years ago . . . 1917

- In 1917 WW1 was still raging and papers kept New Zealanders up to date with what was happening on the fields of battle as well as posting lists of casualties.
- WWI: First Battle of Passchendaele: Allies fail to take a German defensive position with the biggest loss of life in a single day for New Zealand, over 800 of whose men and 45 officers are killed, roughly 1 in 1000 of the nation's population at this time.
- The 19th New Zealand Parliament continued as a coalition led by the Reform Party (pre runner of National). The Prime Minister was William Massey. The general election was deferred because of the war.
- The population of New Zealand was one million, one hundred and forty nine thousand, two hundred and twenty. Almost equal numbers of male and female (from the Census and Statistics Office July 1917).
- In December, 6 o'clock closing of hotel bars was introduced as a wartime measure. This lasted 50 years and did not have a significant effect on reducing alcohol consumption and probably contributed to the growth of “sly-grog” venues and the illicit alcohol trade.
- Proclamation by King George V changes the name of British Royal family from German Saxe-Coburg-Gotha to Windsor.
- Tolkien on medical leave from the British Army began writing the Silmarillion (precursor to Lord of the Rings).
- Albert Einstein publishes first paper on cosmology.
- John F Kennedy was born.
- Arthur Leslie Lydiard was born.
- Mary Pickford, Gloria Swanson, Douglas Fairbanks and Buster Keaton were the leading actors of the day.
- And in Syria 400,000 people died of starvation, ethnic cleansing and war (nothing much changes does it?)

Indomitable Women of Mt Albert

Anne Elizabeth Jane Garlick nee Houghton b. 23 September 1847 – d. 30 April 1947.

If anyone can be called the mother of Mt Albert, I believe it is Annie Garlick. She lived her life in service to her community of Mt Albert and was influential in the formation of community assets that we still have and use today such as the croquet, tennis and bowling clubs, as well as Ferndale House. Her photo in Dick Scott's book *In Old Mt Albert* charmed me. This is how grandmothers should look I thought and this was borne out by her grandson Royston Garlick who talked of "cherishing very fond memories of the cheerful little lady with the white cap, from whom we could all be assured of a smiling welcome to Ferndale."¹

Eighteen year old bride Anne Elizabeth Jane Houghton married twenty four year old Jonathon Tonson Garlick on 20th December 1865. The young couple came directly to their newly built cottage in Mt Albert and christened the home Fern Villa. Their first child George was born there in October 1866, followed over the years by John, Edith, Harriet and Albert. Annie Garlick spent the whole of her married life and widowhood at Ferndale and survived her husband by 49 years. During 1866 Annie Garlick planted the seven Norfolk Pine trees that are still a landmark in Mt Albert. They were brought, (as saplings) on horseback from Hokianga by her husband.

Annie presided over Ferndale, her home which was the venue for many meetings and events and became a focal point of community life in the district. Along with her husband Annie was a founding member of the Mt Albert Methodist Church, she played the organ and taught Sunday School and she was at the centre of Methodist religious and social life of Mt Albert. She was an ardent worker for the Ferndale Tennis and Bowling Clubs both of which were established on their property. Mt Albert Bowling Club commenced at Ferndale, opening October 1897 until 1908 when it moved to larger grounds. A presentation made to Annie, took the form of a handsome silver fruit and cake stand and bore the inscription "presented to Mrs J T Garlick by the members of the Mt Albert Bowling Club as a slight recognition of her many kindnesses during its 10 years sojourn at Ferndale". Mrs Garlick was made a life member of the club.²

Annie Garlick also supported the Mt Albert Croquet Club in purchasing part of her property to enable them to have two lawns which they still own to this day.

Mrs Garlick died in April 1947, just shy of her 100th birthday but not before she had negotiated the sale of Ferndale to the Mt Albert Borough Council for its continued use as a community meeting place. The council took possession of the house a month after she died. It was put to use as Plunket rooms and a kindergarten and is now legally a public reserve.



Annie Garlick (Houghton) it is thought taken around the time of her marriage in 1865



Annie Garlick taken sometime before 1916

¹ Better Rub than Rust p 54 R Garlick

² Auck Star 27 May 1908

THANKS TO SPEEDY SIGNS

Many thanks to Speedy Signs who have once again come up trumps in donating the painting of the sandwich board with our logo and a blackboard. They previously painted our MAHS logo sign on the front of 869 New North Road. You can contact them on 5226960 or newmarket@speedysigns.co.nz

