



# MOUNT ALBERT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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## 52 Lloyd Avenue – a quinessential bungalow



This very attractive bungalow at 52 Lloyd Avenue, Mt Albert was built between 1925 -1928.

It's second owner Alfred Ferdinand Bennett and his wife Clarine purchased the property in 1929 and both lived there until their deaths in old age. Alfred aged 81 in 1965 and Clarine in 1975 aged 84. Alfred Ferdinand Bennett was a barrister and solicitor and was admitted to the Bar on March 10, 1906. He married Clarine Fallwell in 1914, became a partner in Alexander & Bennett in 1919 and became Mayor of Mt Albert in 1921. His mayoralty was beset with major problems during those few years, namely the rubbish tip debacle of 1921 when the dreadful state of the Morningside Dump made national headlines. Following the headlines, an enquiry was made into the state of Auckland's tips. Mayor Bennett's tenure as Mayor was not long. The Mt Albert typhoid outbreak in 1922 cost him votes and he perhaps wisely chose not to seek re-election. However Bennett Street, just around the corner from Lloyd Avenue Mt Albert, (originally called Albert Street) was named after him in the 1938 street renaming programme.



Flower "art paper" in sitting room



Original dresser purchase from the Bennett Estate

It's third and current owners are Dr Thomas and Mrs Helen Miller. They purchased it from the Bennetts deceased estate of Clarine Bennett widow of Alfred Bennett in 1976 and have lived there for the past 40 years.

Helen and Tom purchased some furniture items from the Bennett estate which are still in use. The flower wallpaper in the sitting room and the bird paper in the dining room are the original coverings. When the Bungalow style left California for New Zealand it took with it the low pitched gable roof with wide eaves, wide deep porches, heavy beams and thick tapered piers, massive chimneys and shingles for the walls. In the hands of New Zealand builders, bungalows soon acquired bow and bay windows, casement and fanlight windows, corrugated iron on the roof and weatherboards on the outer walls.

In early bungalows kitchens and bathrooms were match lined with tongue and grooved boards. Architraves around doors and windows were much plainer than the deeply moulded trims in the villas. Most common was a plain board either with a shallow bevel over half its face or simply tapered upwards while the architrave over the head of the opening tapered each way from the middle.<sup>1</sup>

Panelled walls in the bungalows were generally stained dark but most other surfaces were light coloured. Ceilings were painted and walls either painted or covered in wallpapers known as "Art papers".<sup>2</sup>

The Miller house conforms in this regard. Their kitchen and bathroom are still match lined. The art paper photo with the birds is wallpapered in panels in the dining room and the flower pattern in the living room.

<sup>1</sup> Old New Zealand Houses p189 Jeremy Salmond

<sup>2</sup> Old New Zealand Houses p210 Jeremy Salmond

## Tom's Tale... how an Auckland Hospital cottage was saved

I worked at the Department of Medicine based in Auckland Hospital for the last fifty years. In 1983 the medical centre was knocked down and replaced with the Oncology block. Just to the back of the original unit was a little cottage and on Christmas Eve about 34 years ago, I was leaving work and enquired of the demolition team what was next on the demolition list. "This shed" they said, to which I replied "You can't do that. That little cottage is an historic building. Look, I'll buy it." And so the cottage was sold for \$50.

The next problem was what to do with the cottage as it was Christmas Eve. No problem, the demolition team said. For another couple of hundred dollars they would move it to Mt Albert for me. Somehow they got it up onto the back of the flat top and we set off with me following. They went up Symonds St with this thing perched on the back, down Newton Rd and on to the motorway.

We had only been on the motorway about 50 metres before three Auckland City police cars pulled up to ask if they had a permit to shift the cottage. On being told no, as it was an urgent job that had to be done before Christmas, the police said it's over height and over width for the wagon and it's now got a \$300 fine. What's more it was a traffic hazard and it would have to be left on the side of the motorway until we had a permit.

Further negotiations with the police ensued and the end result was that they reluctantly agreed to allow us to continue to Mt Albert, though the fine would still have to be paid, and, that we may well get another fine if we were picked up by the Mt Albert police.

Arriving at 52 Lloyd Avenue, the truck was backed down the driveway in the process knocking down the front brick wall including the letter box. The next challenge was to get the cottage off the truck without a crew of men to lift it down. The solution - they got their jacks out and jacked up the front of the truck on an angle and got onto the truck with their crowbars and pushed the cottage.

"Unbelievable!" I said, "I don't like the look of that, this has the potential to go all wrong." "No, no," they said, "it will be alright, it will just ease off and drop down there."

Well it went off all right, it went up and up and up. Damnation I thought it's going to go through the front windows. It sort of tottered and then fell back and pretty much fell apart.

So that was Christmas Eve!

The next day was Christmas Day. We had this wreck on the driveway and I thought I would use it for firewood. My next door neighbour Graham (a builder) came over and asked "what have you got there?" I said, "Well it was a little cottage from Auckland Hospital but I'm afraid it's become firewood."

"Oh no, you can't do that" he said and to cut a long story short he and a couple of his mates came around on Boxing Day, pulled segments of the cottage around to the back and spent most of their Christmas holidays putting it back together again."

*The cottage is about 100 years old. It had been used as a library, a photography department and as storage, but the history Tom was most interested in was of Dr Philson (1817-1889) who came across a smallpox victim off a ship berthed at Auckland. Smallpox of course was a horrendous disease in those days and nobody wanted to touch the patient. Dr Philson isolated himself with the patient in that cottage until the patient died. (The Philson library at Auckland University is named after him.*

*Dr Tom Miller has co-authored a book on the history of the early days of the university and Auckland Hospital, "In the Beginning" a history of the Department of Medicine of Auckland Hospital and at the University of Auckland.*



*The cottage in situ at Auckland Hospital*



*The cottage in the process of being rebuilt in the back garden*



*The cottage today*

## M.A.H.S Dates To Remember

**May 21, 2016 (Saturday) 2pm.** Ferndale House 830 New North Road, Mt Albert

Auckland Place Names – an illustrated talk by Phil Sai Louie, revealing the fascinating history and culture behind the names of Auckland suburbs, natural features and streets. \$2 entry all welcome.

**July 9, 2016 (Saturday) 2pm.** Mt Albert Baptist Church 732 New North Road, Mt Albert

(Volcano talk with specific reference to Mt Albert) by Bruce Hayward. Mr Hayward is both a marine ecologist and a geologist. He has published a book called Volcanoes of Auckland. \$2 entry all welcome.

**August 27, 2016 (Saturday) 2pm.** Ferndale House Annual General Meeting of Mt Albert Historical Society Inc.

**Mt Albert Historical Society book on Mount Albert.** Our grateful thanks to those who donated \$1000 each to become Platinum Sponsors. There is still the opportunity for anyone else to do so. Your name will be featured in the book acknowledgements as a Platinum Sponsor and you will receive a copy of the book signed by the author. You and your partner will be invited as a VIP to the launch of the book later this year. Please contact Judith Goldie Ph 817 6279 if you wish to participate.

### The Flanders Poppy

The red or Flanders poppy has been linked with battlefield deaths since the time of the Great War (1914–18). The connection was made, most famously, by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae in his poem 'In Flanders fields'.

McCrae a Canadian medical officer who, distressed at the death and suffering around him, scribbled the verse in his notebook. In a cemetery nearby, red poppies blew gently in the breeze – a symbol of regeneration and growth in a landscape of blood and destruction.

McCrae threw away the poem, but a fellow officer rescued it and sent it on to the English magazine Punch; 'In Flanders fields' was published on 8 December 1915. Three years later, on 28 January 1918, McCrae was dead. As he lay dying, he is reported to have said 'Tell them this, if ye break faith with us who die, we shall not sleep.'

Many people were moved by the pathos of 'In Flanders fields'. Among them was Moina Michael (1869–1944). Two days before the signing of the Armistice (11 November 1918), she wrote a reply to McCrae: 'We shall keep the faith'.

Michael set herself a mission: to have the red poppy adopted in the United States as a national symbol of remembrance. The American Legion adopted it at its annual convention in September 1920. Attending that event was Madame E. Guérin who, along with Michael, was responsible for making the poppy an international symbol of remembrance. For the next year or so Guérin and others approached veterans' groups in many countries, urging them to adopt the poppy as a symbol of remembrance.

New Zealand was one of these countries. The Returned Soldiers' Association planned to hold its first Poppy Day appeal around the time of Armistice Day 1921 as other countries were doing. The ship carrying the poppies from France arrived in New Zealand too late for the scheme to be properly publicised. The association decided to wait until the next Anzac Day, 1922.

The poppies went on sale the day before Anzac Day. This first Poppy Day appeal was a huge success. Many centres sold out early in the day. The association used the donations to assist needy, unemployed returned soldiers and their families. The popularity of Poppy Day quickly grew. There were record collections during the Second World War. By 1945, 750,000 poppies were being distributed nationwide, which equates to half the population wearing the familiar red symbol of remembrance. The tradition of the poppy at Anzac day instead of Armistice Day continues to this day.

'The red poppy', URL: <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/war/anzac-day/poppies>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage)



## NEW ZEALAND PRIMARY SCHOOL AIR RAID SHELTERS by Glennys McGlashan

In 1939 New Zealand was 'at war' with Germany and Japan. Primary school children in New Zealand suddenly found that their daily routines were changed as the threat of invasion by the Japanese became closer to a reality. After the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour the South Pacific was their next target. Darwin in Australia was bombed heavily by the Japanese and 240 people were killed. This information was played down by the Australian Government at the time to avoid people in Australia and New Zealand panicking. In fact Darwin received more bombs than Pearl Harbour. Broome and Exmouth in Western Australia were also bombed by the Japanese with less severe casualties.

My brother, Ernest, attended Gladstone Primary School in Mt Albert, Auckland.

As he lived approximately two kilometres from school he was given a temporary home to go to in case of bombing of Auckland City. Ernest had to cross the railway line in Gladstone Road to reach his home and this was also considered a dangerous area for children as the Japanese were very accurate at bombing railway lines, airports and supply stations. He visited the allocated home and found a rather stern spinster had provided a camp stretcher and blankets for him in case of emergency. He was only eight years old and was

quite upset that he had to go to a complete stranger's house and actually may have to sleep there. There were very few households that had telephones in those days. In our street, Allendale Road, only the doctor had a telephone. There would be no way that my brother could phone home or contact his family which was quite a challenge for a small boy. Several rehearsals were held at school and he had to run to the emergency house and stay there an hour until the 'all clear' was announced by way of a siren. At school several air raid shelters were built of concrete and children practiced regularly to go to their shelter when the siren went. They all treated it as a joke and didn't realise the significance of what was happening in the South Pacific at that time. In the classroom children were shown pictures of German and Japanese aeroplanes.

They were told to look at any planes flying over the school and recognise the type of plane. A popular classroom lesson was making models of planes so that the children could recognise the types of 'bombers'. Small children became expert plane spotters.

In the 1950's shelter sheds were used as changing sheds for school swimming pools with girls at one end and boys at the opposite end.



*Ernest aged 10 years and Glennys aged 3 years in 1943. Ernest is wearing a beret as part of his school army training uniform.*



*Gladstone School in the 1930's  
Photographer unknown, 1930s, Sir George Grey Special Collections,  
Auckland Libraries, 255A-74.*