



MOUNT ALBERT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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The Logan Family and the Prince of Wales Estate

The Prince of Wales Estate was one of Mt Albert's large 1920s subdivisions. The name is not used today, but in the past it was as recognisable as Morningside. The Estate was developed by James Logan and his family, who were closely involved with it for many decades. This article introduces the Logans, and gives an overview of the Estate.

From Yachts to Bungalows

The Prince of Wales Estate was developed by James Martin Logan (1867-1939) and his family: brothers Jock (John), Robert, Arch and Willie, sisters Jessie and Mary, Arch's wife Sadie, and in later years by nephews Doug and Jack and nieces Madge and Doreen. The Logans were from Glasgow, arriving in Auckland in 1874 on the *Zealandia*. Their father Robert was one of Auckland's leading yacht and boatbuilders and his sons followed his trade. In the 1890s, Jock, Arch and Robert Jr set up as Logan Bros, producing many beautiful yachts and launches. Arch was recognised as one of the top yacht designers in the world. A yachting friend introduced the family to the Open Brethren and most of the Logans became devoted members of this community.



Most of the Logan family c 1915. Madge, Arch, Doug, Jessie, James (centre), Sadie, Jack, Robert Jr, Mary and Doreen

In 1910 Logan Bros lost their city boatyard, as the land was needed to build King's Wharf. The Auckland Harbour Board paid them a sizeable compensation, which allowed them to change direction. Arch continued working with yachts in a smaller yard. James, Jock and Robert Jr now worked full-time as property developers and house builders, using their business acumen, design flair and meticulous craftsmanship. In the years before WWI, James and Jock built many houses in Stanley Point – James's obituary says he built 150 Devonport homes. Some were commissioned, but many were on sections owned by the Logans, and they rented out houses until they sold. This was the model they later applied in Mt Albert.

In 1914 James built a large house in Remuera and all the siblings apart from Arch, the only one who married, moved in. They moved to Mt Eden in 1924, and lived together until James's death in 1939.

In September 1914, James Logan purchased a large dairy farm on the edge of Mt Albert [NA72/75] with the intention of subdividing it. James was the legal owner

and face of the development, but the project involved his family as developers, project managers, builders and landlords. The Logans had hands-on involvement until the late 1950s at least. The subdivision was delayed by the war, but in 1920 the brakes came off and work commenced on the Prince of Wales Estate.

The Prince of Wales

On 24 April 1920, Prince Edward the Prince of Wales began a four week tour of New Zealand, visiting fifty towns and cities and being feted by loyal subjects. He shook 20,000 hands. Privately, the Prince found the colonial enthusiasm distasteful, writing home to his mistress Mrs. Freda Dudley Ward, that "*We managed to keep fairly cheery despite never 1 hour free from returned soldiers & schoolchildren! Christ their*



cheers & “God saves” and “God blesses” get on my nerves.” In 1937, he would become King Edward VIII, and would reign for just 11 months before abdicating so he could marry Wallis Simpson, but that was all in the future. The use of his title in the marketing of the Estate was sure to catch attention. James Logan used the name “Prince of Wales Estate” in a newspaper ad for the first time in October 1921.

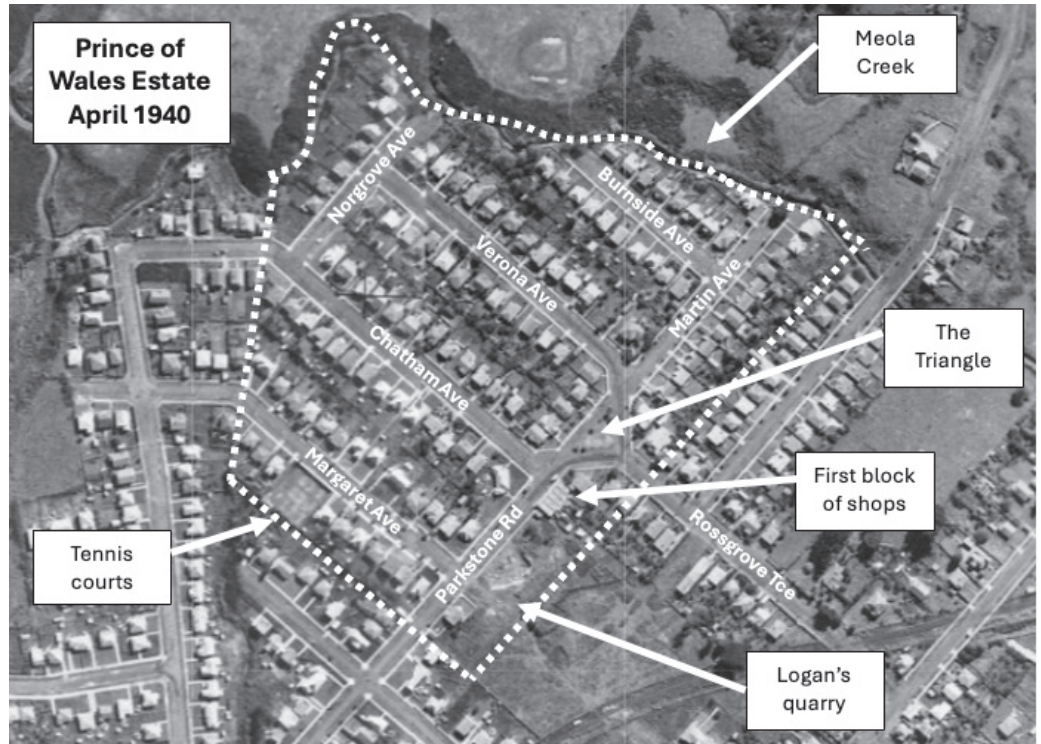
The Estate’s boundaries

The heart of the Prince of Wales Estate is the Triangle, at the top of Rossgrove Tce where it intersects with Martin Ave. The Estate is bordered on the north and east by Meola Creek. It takes in all sections in Burnside, Verona and Norgrove Aves, and in the straight parts of Chatham and Margaret Aves between Martin Ave and the point where the roads turn west. It includes both sides of Martin Ave, from the west of Margaret Ave to Meola Creek. See below for a history of street names and changes.

The bends in Margaret and Chatham Aves mark the boundary between Auckland and Mt Albert Council areas. Before amalgamation in 1989, the Mt Albert side was considered to be better maintained, and people could tell when they had crossed the boundary.

James Logan also owned the land between the Martin Ave shops and the railway line, including the land where Doreen Ave was later constructed. This block was not developed until after he died in 1939 (see photo above). State houses were built on it from the 1940s, and the Logan Village Pensioner Housing was built in the early 1960s. For this reason we are excluding it from the boundaries of the 1920s Prince of Wales Estate. Logan had a bluestone quarry on this empty land, and contracted a group of Dalmatians to quarry rock for road kerbing and for lining Meola Creek. Local children enjoyed playing in the quarry.

When it was first subdivided, the only road access to the Estate was via Rossgrove Tce. It would be several years before Parkstone Rd (now Martin Ave) was connected with Monaghan Ave and Guardwell Tce. Surrounded by farmland, the Estate was like a lollypop on a stick on the very edge of Mt Albert. Residents needed to ensure that visitors and deliveries came to the correct part of the suburb, so the Prince of Wales Estate name became an important part of the address.



The Subdivision

The first sections, in Verona and Norwood Aves, were placed on the market in December 1921, and the Logans had already built some houses by that time. Sections were ambitiously advertised as having “commanding land and sea views.” Chatham Ave was opened next, followed by Margaret Ave and Parkstone Rd (now Martin Ave, west of the Triangle). Then came Martin Ave east of the Triangle, and Burnside Ave; by 1925 all 125 residential sections were available.

However, almost nothing sold in the first few years, and sales remained slow until the 1940s. The desirable corner sections near the Triangle were snapped up by builder William Biggs who erected bungalows and on-sold them, and a handful of other sections were purchased by individuals and by Biggs and other spec builders. Undeterred, the Logans built many more houses themselves, which they offered for sale or rent alongside unimproved sections. 13 Burnside Ave was one of these homes, built by the Logans and rented to the Singleton family who purchased it several years later. In 1928 a new five-roomed bungalow could be rented for 35/- a week. During the Depression, nothing sold, and rents dropped: by 1931 a 5-roomed bungalow could be rented for 27/6.

In December 1937, the Government purchased empty sections in subdivisions across Auckland to build 848 new state houses. They acquired almost all the remaining empty sections in the Prince of Wales Estate and built 16 single-unit houses and three duplexes.

Services

Sewer, water and gas connections were all available by 1922, but the area was not fully connected to electricity until November 1926. Despite the regal name and good quality house building, the Prince of Wales Estate was

considered to be “on the wrong side of the tracks” compared with other parts of Mt Albert that were more conveniently located. The nearest tram stop to the Estate was at the corner of Wairere Ave and New North Rd. This was also where the closest shops, public telephone box and taxi rank were located. Baldwin Ave Railway Station did not open until 1953, so catching the train required a walk to Mt Albert or Morningside stations. Primary school children attending Gladstone School walked across paddocks until the roads were connected.

In 1926 James Logan built the first small shop at the Rossgrove Tce end of what is now the Martin Ave shops. He sold this to grocer William Sadgrove, who retained the property until 1957, renting the shop to a series of grocers. By 1927 the rest of the concrete shops had been erected. For many decades these housed a dairy next door to the grocer, then a haberdashery, fruiterer, and a butchery on the end. The second block of shops on the other side of Logan Lane was erected in 1958 by Jack, Doreen and Madge Logan.

In December 1927, Logan built three chipped tennis courts at 36 Margaret Ave, which became an important community hub: from 1943 they were owned by St Luke’s Church. He also built the chapel on the corner of Doreen Ave and transferred ownership to the Brethren.

Architectural styles

The houses in the Estate are mostly bungalows, with some notable variations. Several in Burnside and Martin Aves have Tudor revival features, others are in the English Cottage style, and every street has at least one State House. In 2021, Auckland Council’s Unitary Plan identified the area around Burnside, Verona, and Martin Aves as the *Martin Avenue Special Character Area*, as there had been so few changes since the 1920s. However, many houses in the Estate have been extended, outwards or upwards, and there are a few instances of backyard subdivisions.

The Legacy

The Logans were quiet, hard working, strong-willed and deeply religious. James Logan was considered to be a good man who genuinely cared about the residents of his Estate. He died in 1939, aged 71. By then, all but three of the house sections in the Estate were built on. After his death his family continued to manage the Prince of Wales Estate, renting and selling properties. Although not Mt Albert residents, their influence over six decades and two generations was significant.

This is a condensed version of the facts we have gathered so far. If you have any information or stories about the Prince of Wales Estate, please contact us.

Article by Lynley Stone

The Streets of the Prince of Wales Estate

The Logan family and their maritime connections feature prominently. In 1938 many Mt Albert street names changed and some of the allusions have been lost.

Burnside Ave. Burn, the Scottish word for creek, refers to Meola Creek.

Chatham Ave. On 1 October 1920 *HMS Chatham* was the first ship commissioned into the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy.

Logan Lane. The small accessway between the two blocks of shops, named after the Logan family.

Margaret Ave. Named after Arch Logan’s daughter Madge. Nearby **Doreen Ave** was named for her sister.

Norwood Ave. Probably a geographic name – the northern part of the Estate, edged with trees. Renamed **Norgrove Ave** (1938).

Martin Ave. Martin was James Logan’s middle name. It might also refer to neighboring landowner William Hurst Martin. Originally, this was the name of the short section of road from The Triangle to Meola Creek. Around 1955, Martin Ave was extended to take in the rest of the road, previously called **Parkstone Rd**, although Parkstone was still in use as late as 1959 on land transfer documents.

Roslyn Tce. Not part of Logan’s Prince of Wales subdivision, although it provided access to it. Renamed **Rossgrove Tce** (1938).

The Triangle. A descriptive address for the small number of houses that faced the top of Rossgrove Tce. Around 1955, houses that fronted onto this large intersection were given the option of retaining their address as The Triangle, or changing to Martin Ave.

Veronica Ave. Like Chatham Ave, this street is named for a naval vessel. *HMS Veronica* was a British ship which joined the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy late in 1920. She became famous in 1931 when her crew were amongst first responders in Napier after the Hawkes Bay Earthquake. Renamed **Verona Ave** (1938).

Sources:

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Auckland Council GIS viewer. *1940 aerial photograph*. [photo source]

Ministry of Culture & Heritage (2020). *Prince of Wales arrives for New Zealand tour*. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/page/prince-wales-arrives-new-zealand-tour> [photo source]

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Papers Past, Ancestry, Auckland Libraries, LINZ

Thanks to Olwyn Anderson and Harold Kidd for additional information

MAHS PAST EVENT REPORTS

Sunday 17 March: Chris Hagon on his work in English Historic Houses

Chris gave a fascinating illustrated account of his work for the National Trust, UK, to a very satisfying turnout of members. After working as a volunteer at Woolsthorpe Manor in Lincolnshire, which enabled him to meet National Trust staff, he was posted to Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire as property manager. This neoclassical house and gardens were designed by Robert Adam for Nathaniel Curzon, the 1st Lord Scarsdale. Chris and his family lived in the servants' quarters, while the donor family lived in the Family Wing. One of Chris's tasks was fund raising, for example via outdoor summer concerts and providing a set for films and television. Later assignments were at Belvoir Castle, the Duke and Duchess of Rutland's huge private estate in Leicestershire, and Rockingham Castle, a medieval castle in Northamptonshire commissioned by William the Conqueror. Chris's talk gave a rare insider's view into examples of the many historic houses and castles in Britain. *Summary by Cathie Hutchinson*



Sunday 14 April: Prince of Wales Heritage Walk

On a still, sunny day, Mary Inomata and Lynley Stone led a large group on a cheerful walk around the Prince of Wales Estate. As well as information about the Logans, street names and Estate development, we heard about St Helen's Hospital and Auckland Institute of Studies, Meola Creek, the Central Interceptor, the shops, and many stories about people and community events.

25 April: ANZAC Day Service

The Mt Albert Historical Society wreath was laid by MAHS Members Irene Wang and Susan Drake. Albert-Eden Local Board Chair Margi Watson chaired the ceremony. MP Helen White spoke about the losses of war, of New Zealand's focus on peacekeeping, and of the unsettled environment we are now in. At this time, we remember our own loved ones who have served and who currently serve, and we remember the people from Mt Albert who have served and have been impacted by wars throughout the world.



Photos of Chris and the walkers by Sue Aitchison-Windeler. Photo of Irene and Susan laying the wreath by Frances Lo.

If anybody would like photos from MAHS events they have attended, please contact us.

MAHS DATES TO REMEMBER

Saturday 6 July 2-4pm, Ferndale House. Member Stories Event – Theme: Food, Cooking or the Kitchen.

Our next event will be one of our popular meetings where a group of Members share stories on a theme. We have room for 12 speakers in the programme, each with a story 3-4 minutes long. Please email janetvonrandow@gmail.com to put your name on the list of speakers. Afternoon tea will follow. A gold coin donation is appreciated. Masks are encouraged to protect our vulnerable members. No need to RSVP.

Sunday 15 September 2-4pm. Ferndale House. MAHS Annual General Meeting. Guest Speaker Lisa Truttman on Ōwairaka/Mt Albert. Please join us for our AGM. After the meeting, Lisa will speak on her research about Ōwairaka Maunga/Mt Albert. Afternoon tea will follow.

Another heritage highlight coming up:

28 September-13 October. Auckland Council Heritage Festival. This annual programme will be jam-packed with interesting events. We encourage you to explore what is on offer and to book early for events.