

Mt Victoria Historical Society News

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STOP PRESS

Tuesday, December 3

Karori Historical Society have kindly invited us to attend a special meeting they are having on Tuesday, December 3. Susan Maclean, who is writing a book about well-known Wellington architect Frederick de Jersey Clere, is going to be the speaker at that meeting.

The Society meets in St Ninian's Church Hall, Newcombe Crescent, Karori at 7.45 pm

It would be helpful for them to know how many are coming, so if you'd like to go please contact Judith Burch on 476 4400. (If you can't get hold of her, don't let that stop you going, however.)

Last newsletter of the year so this seems like a good time to give you an idea of what events might be coming up next year and what the Committee plans to do.

Logo

We are going to investigate development of a logo for MVHS, so that we can start to be more visible around our suburb and in Wellington. (The little houses you see on all our newsletters are standard Microsoft clipart and we feel we can do better than that.) At the moment, ideas are focusing around the image of the Queen Victoria statue, which has almost become a symbol of the entry to Mt Victoria. We'd like to get back to you early in the New Year with some proposals for you to give us your feedback on.

In the meantime, if you have any great ideas, skills in graphic/logo design or good contacts, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Jo Newman on 385 2254.

Street Signs

Development of a logo ties in with the other project we are investigating. This is to replace some standard street signs in Mt Victoria with special heritage ones. You may have noticed that this has been done in Petone and we feel it plays a great part in promoting the sense of history in the area. We would aim, initially, to have signs installed on the main streets, such as Marjoribanks, Brougham, Pirie, Hawker etc. and, depending on funding, move on from there.

Today's residents are often not aware of the fascinating Wellington history reflected in our street names. The streets of Mt Victoria are also increasingly explored by tourists. When I was hosting visitors from Shanghai recently, and showed them a painting of Willis Street in the 1800's, they asked "Where can we go to see little wooden houses like that?" Naturally I said "Mt Victoria, just at the end of Courtenay Place."

So, the feasibility and practicalities of this project are currently being discussed with the Council, and we hope to let you know more about it in the New Year.

Activities for next year

There will be another newsletter early in the New Year, but at this stage we can tell you that the first event will be a guided walk in March. For this, we will tie in with the City Council's *Walk Promotion Month*, which will also give us much wider publicity. The films at Time Cinema were such a hit that we'll arrange another mid-winter session there in June. Other possibilities not yet finalised include a talk about the earthquakes of 1848, 1855 and more recently.

HISTORICAL NOTE

The Nineteenth Century Wellington Rich List Houston Francis Logan (c. 1838-1922)

Measured by property, Houston Francis Logan is estimated¹ to have been among the top ten richest people in Wellington in 1882. He was by far the wealthiest person to live in Mt Victoria in the 1880's. Most wealthy people at that time, and for quite some time after, lived in Thorndon. Logan had inherited property from his father, had two grocery shops, a number of rental properties in his own right and rural properties running two flocks of sheep.

Houston was the son of Dr Francis Logan, who had visited New Zealand as a surgeon in the Royal Navy in 1837. He must have liked what he saw because he returned to Glasgow but immigrated to Wellington in 1840 on the Bengal Merchant with his wife and the infant, Houston. The family may have lived out of the city for some of the 1840's but they were settled on their two town acres at the junction of Webb and Hopper streets at a fairly early date.

Houston Logan ran grocery businesses in Lambton Quay and Cuba St from 1866 until 1884, when he retired. In 1868 he was gazetted a Captain in the New Zealand Militia and was still on the Unattached List (made up of those who had served their country and "retired on their laurels"², but who could be called on to assist in the event that there were insufficient officers on the active list available for an emergency) in 1897. He also represented Te Aro Ward on the City Council from September 1877 to September 1893.

Logan owned substantial property on Town Acres 672 and 673 in Mt Victoria from some time in the 1870's until some time in the 1890's as well as other Mt Victoria properties. He lived in the large house on Town Act 673 (at the extreme south end of Brougham Street across Ellice St) from about 1880 to 1887. Then he returned to Mt Victoria in the late 1890's to live the last 25 or so years of his life in a house where No 72 Brougham St (Embassy Court Flats) now stands. His mother Janet lived close by, or at the same address, until she died in 1903. It is not known whether he had a wife or children himself.

*To the Town Clerk
Wellington*
Sir
*Please lay before the
Public Works Committee
the accompanying Application
for new roads as per plan
on behalf of the undersigned
Yours etc
H. F. Logan*

*Wellington
16th Sept 1878.*

1878 letter signed by Logan requesting the creation of new roads.
Unfortunately it is not known which roads!
[Wellington City Archives 00233:2:1878/1070]

Calendar

Clyde Quay School has put out another of its fabulous calendars with scenes of historical Mt Victoria. If you haven't yet had little people knocking on your door to sell you one, and would like one, contact Clyde Quay School

¹ By Jeremy Lowe, researcher, Thorndon Society. Many thanks to Jeremy for sharing his research with us.

² Cyclopaedia of NZ Volume 1, 1897