

Mt Victoria Historical Society Inc

ANNUAL REPORT

2015-16

Over the last year, the Mt Victoria Historical Society committee has continued to deliver on the Society's key aims.

Our activities and achievements during the period since the AGM held in August 2015 are set out below.

Newsletters

Four newsletters were delivered to members. Historical articles published included: two by David Lee on the days when families lived in ship hulks on Wellington harbour and when milk was delivered daily to households in Mt Victoria by horse and cart; one on Ettrick Cottage contributed by Jo Newman; and one on the Mt Victoria Tunnel that I wrote.

Early copies of the MVHS newsletter, from the first (November 1995) edition, were added to the collection on the Society's website.

Events

MVHS members went on two guided tours during the year: the first a tour of Wellington's oldest original cottage in Nairn Street, home to three generations of the Wallis family from 1858; and the second, run by the New Zealand Transport Authority Memorial Park Alliance, of the recent and extensive Mt Victoria Tunnel upgrade.

In July, Rachel Brown, an amateur genealogist and history researcher gave us a talk about how, using family history research sources, she traced her family's journey in 1883 from Wiltshire in England to Moir Street and later move to Newtown.

Following our AGM we will hear from Pamela Bell, about the place of pattern houses and prefabricated housing in New Zealand's built environment history.

Heritage advocacy

We made a submission to the Local Government and Environment Committee on the Wellington Town Belt Bill.

Last year a successful outcome of our advocacy with the Mt Victoria Residents' Association was the allocation of \$50,000 in Wellington City Council's Long-Term Plan for a heritage study of Mt Victoria. This year MVHS/MVRA Committee members met twice with representatives of the Wellington City Council for updates on progress with the heritage study. The project involves the collection of reliable, high-quality information on the characteristics and values of historic Mt Victoria buildings, for use by the Council and ratepayers alike. To help reduce time and costs, we shared knowledge and information researched and collected over the years. The WCC team has produced maps from data collected during field work showing the building style and integrity of houses and other types of buildings, and is now looking for further information on individual buildings.

Together with the MVRA we requested Heritage New Zealand to take action to ensure that an archaeological assessment was undertaken of the nineteenth-century building at 7 Majoribanks Street, formerly a Chinese laundry and about to be demolished.

Basin Reserve redevelopment

In August, representatives of local community groups including MVHS attended a meeting with the Wellington City Council and the project architects to provide input for informing concept designs for redeveloping the Basin Reserve. Apart from maintaining the Basin's status as the premier test cricket venue in New Zealand, an aim of the project is to strengthen its value to and connection with the community by opening up the ground and enhancing it as a recreation space for community use and enjoyment.

St Gerard's Church and Monastery: Seismic assessment

MVHS provided a letter of support for a grant application to help finance an engineering assessment of the seismic strength of St Gerard's church and monastery.

Conclusion

Many thanks to the committee of the past year for all their work: Sue Watt for her management of the Society's finances and membership, our Secretary Jane O'Loughlin, David Lee, who has contributed two historical articles and arranged regular cleaning of the historical display panels on the wall of the Embassy building, and Alan Olliver who joined us early this year following his return to Wellington.

Thank you also to our members for your support. We hope you feel you have received value and enjoyment from your subscriptions and we look forward to your continued involvement.

David McCrone
Convenor

16 October 2016