

Margaret Hewett - nee Jensen

It is with sadness that we recognise the death of Margaret on the 11th March 2017. Margaret has been a loyal friend, volunteer and secretary for some years for the MHVC Trust. She will be remembered for her personality, her friendly smile and the hundreds of Anzac biscuits she produced for the annual Coach House Anzac Concert.

A Football Bank - a children's antique toy

Among the metal toys displayed in the museum recently was a Football Bank. These antique, cast iron mechanical banks were probably produced about 1900-1905 and were a product from John Harper and Company, of Willenhall, Staffordshire, England. Other well known banks were the Harlequin Jester, Aunt Jemima, Little Joe, and Smilin' Sam from Alibam', but as those names suggest they were made in the USA.

Harper catalogues in 1902 stated that this bank could be supplied in Club Colours if you bought a dozen or more, so it may indicate that the bank was possibly used as a trophy or a prize, as well as a child's toy.

To operate the bank a large English penny was placed on the sloped platform

in front of the player's right foot. Then the player's right leg is pulled back into kicking position where it is held in place by the operating lever. On pressing the lever the player kicks the coin into the opening between the goal posts on the basket. A screw on the underside of the base allows the goal basket to be opened for removal of coins. The bank is approximately 9 inches long, 3 inches wide and 5 high.

In a recent antique, toy sale in the USA one of these Football banks gained a very high price. So next time you hunt in the toy box for old toys you too may get a wonderful surprise.

With thanks to Tom Fitzsimons for showing us the toy and Ken Tinnock for making a new spring and finding a screw to make the toy fully workable.

RH



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Awahuri Forest-Kitchener Park

As people enter the museum many are overwhelmed by the montage of trees and the melodic bird song. The tree scene is taken in Kitchener Park by Brian Hunter and assembled to create a typical early bush locality.



I had wondered what the history was of that area and the following are excerpts from the booklet produced by the Awahuri Forest Trust.

It was originally known as Awahuri Bush scenic reserve, and the main road to Feilding ran right through it from Kawakawa Road to Awahuri Road. The Makino or Mangakino Stream runs through the Park and over time has changed its course as floods occurred. There are several small ponds and oxbow lakes that dry out in the summer but provided the essential moisture required to sustain the forest.

In the early 1870s Awahuri Bush was owned by local Maori who leased it to John Hughey, who later purchased it freehold.

The next owner, Edward Riddiford took great care of the site and resisted calls from the local community to sell it to the council. When he died in 1911 his son negotiated with Feilding Borough Council to buy the bush area and local subscriptions were sought for this purchase. The 18 acre strip of land opposite Awahuri Bush, known as Whisker's Bush was purchased by The Government after visits from Ministers. The official opening of the two reserves took place in January 1916 and six months later the reserve was named Kitchener Park in honour of Lord Kitchener.

It has been maintained by MDC since amalgamation. Sadly over the years the Park became neglected until a new restoration initiative was put in place in

1991 when the closing of the local meat works left many unemployed. Led by six former staff members and the industrial chaplain, Gavin Scott, a group set to work in Kitchener Park to weed and re-plant many of the species that had been lost over the years of flooding and neglect. Of late six Air Force community workers and school children have helped plant seedlings.

The massive task of weeding out all the *tradescantia*—Wandering Jew – that smothered the re-growth of native seedlings was a priority. Gradually the forest was cleared and tracks and boardwalks were created.

Sadly there was a massive flood in October 1998, and thick mud swept in and coated the Park wrecking much of the work. The reserve was littered with debris and boardwalks were ruined. Volunteers once again set to work to repair and restore the Park,

but two subsequent floods in 2015 and 2016 continued to damage and destroy species.

Kitchener Park is one of the few, last remaining, original lowland, podocarp swamp forests in the Manawatu.

Notable visitors to the park have been Sir Edmund Hillary in 1996 and Professor David Bellamy. A Trust was formed in 2013 to ensure the survival and restoration of the forest. A new boardwalk allows visitors to get close to some of Manawatu's oldest, most valuable trees.

With thanks to Jill Darragh and the Awahuri Forest Trust for providing me with this history.

The booklet, 'Awahuri Forest-Kitchener Park' is available from The Coach House Museum.



Awahuri Forest - Kitchener Park, Feilding c1905

Skills & Trades of Yesteryear - Make it a Day to Remember
1st April 2017 - 10am to 4pm at The Coach House - Demonstrations
 from a Wheelwright, Farrier, Wood bender, Printery, Butter making,
 Shearing—Blades & Machine, Traction Engine, Tractor rides and much much more....

Puzzle Jug and Platter

Displayed in the foyer are two pieces of pottery. One is a puzzle jug that was a wedding gift to William Robert Ronald and his wife Janet Stevens, who were married in 1906. It is now owned by their grandson, Donal Duthie who is a volunteer in the Archive.

The puzzle jug was popular in the 18th and 19th centuries in homes and taverns. It challenges the user to drink from it without spilling any of the contents. The solution comes from having to block off a series of holes with your fingers and, like a straw, drink through one of the attached spouts which is connected to a hollow handle. If all the right holes are not covered the jug will spill.

An inscription is usually written on the jug. One reads:

'Try not to look a fool
 For the result of this pot
 may be quite cruel
 If to not find the golden rule
 This jug will for sure, drip,
 dribble and drool.'

These two pieces, the jug and the platter may have been manufactured by the Burleigh Pottery Company of Middleport, Stoke-on-Trent, England, and were traditionally high quality domestic earthenware. Burleigh was founded in 1851. R H

