

## FRIENDS OF MAURICEVILLE NEWSLETTER JULY 2017



The eighth Annual General Meeting of The Friends of Mauriceville Inc. was held on 2 July 2017 at 2pm in the Kopuaranga Hall. Thank you to all of you that sent apologies. We had a good attendance and welcomed some people for the first time. We hope they enjoyed the opportunity to meet other members. If you have suggestions or new ideas for FOM please don't hesitate to speak up. To sustain FOM for the future we must be thinking ahead and understand what members are hoping to get from their membership.

Unfortunately there were no new nominations for office holder positions but the current officers would very much like to hear from anyone willing to step up. Great on going support would be given to anyone prepared to take a turn.

### *FOM Inc. The Scandinavian Connection*

*Formed in 2008 to preserve and promote the historical Scandinavian cultural heritage of Mauriceville and its associated districts, by working together with pride and in a spirit of co-operation.*

### **Election of Officers**

**Chairperson** Harold Devenport; Correspondence **Secretary** \_\_\_\_\_ **Minutes Secretary** Stuart Hoar; **Treasurer** Denise Devenport; Newsletter **Coordinator** Nerrolly Hoar.

**Committee** Harold and Denise Devenport, Stuart and Nerrolly Hoar, Willy and Julianne Buick, Bill Taylor, Ian Trass and Janice Osborne

### **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

**\$10 per anum or \$100 for Life Membership**

Unpaid subscriptions are due for payment now please.

**Payments can be made directly to our bank account ANZ 06-06890278183-00 \* Please remember to put your name and subscription in the reference field.**

**Or alternatively you can post your cheque to Friends of Mauriceville Inc. c/- 308 Opaki- Kaiparoro Road, RD2, Masterton 5882**

*53a College St.*

### **HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP:**

This was proposed and passed unanimously to be granted to Dr Kay Flavell at the AGM.

Kay saw the opportunity to take the initiative and form FOM. The intention was that smaller groups within the district could work more effectively and apply for grants if they did so collectively as an incorporated society. When she purchased and moved to New Pacific Studio (Kaiparoro) she discovered the significant Scandinavian history of the surrounding area and recognised the importance of recording it for posterity. She embarked on years of research and this culminated in the publication of her books.

FOM published and sells these books. The profits all go to projects in accordance with our aims.

The granting of this Honorary Life Membership was to acknowledge our appreciation of Kay's generosity and all she has done to encourage us. Her books are a great legacy for the future.

### **RAINBOWS OVER MAURICEVILLE:** Kay Flavell.

These books have continued to sell very well. While you have the opportunity, you may like to consider purchasing extra copies for other family members. These are available through our web site or at the Wairarapa Archives Queen Street Masterton at a cost of \$45. A complimentary copy of A Scandinavian Trail, also by Kay, will be included if you purchase through our web site.

### **MAURICEVILLE WEST RESERVE /HISTORIC MAURICEVILLE WEST SCHOOL**

Work commenced on the school in 2013 when a new committee was formed. Since then the following progress has been made: building repiled and a disability ramp added, kitchen floor renewed, spouting replaced, windows restored, painted, glazed and repaired. Top shelter shed totally restored. Girls' shelter shed-repaired and restored. Rotten exterior cladding on school replaced and roof repaired ready for painting. Total spent \$42,141.42.

The committee wishes to thank all who have supported them with donations and hours of voluntary work. Without this help the cost would have been much more.

W & J Buick

### **MAURICEVILLE NORTH CHURCH**

The trustees are pleased to report that the painting of the roof and the exterior of the church has now been completed by volunteers and the next project proposed will be the replacement of the original rotting windows. We are currently waiting for a joiner's quote.

Unfortunately it was necessary to have Protekt spray the church after yet another infestation of cluster flies. It is an unfortunate but unavoidable expense that we incur about once a year.

Some of the gorse to the right of the main track has been cut (thanks to Gavin Lister) but there is more to do as it spreads up from the road side. Weather permitting; the grass at the entrance is sometimes mown. This is not done by the council so if any one anyone is willing to take a mower out and take a turn at anytime it would be appreciated. Shorter grass means easier and safer access to the gates for visitors.

The local Hall and Reserve Committee are continuing with upgrading. The kitchen and meeting room have been upgraded with new wall lining, benches, electrical and plumbing. Stage one of the new toilet improvements has been completed with new plumbing, wall lining and an additional toilet in the Ladies' Rest Room. Work is due to start on the Men's toilet and the foyer in the near future.

H&D Devenport

#### **MAURICEVILLE COUNTRY FAIR**

The annual fair at the Clarke Memorial Reserve will be held on **Sunday 3 December**.

#### **INTERVIEWING PAST AND CURRENT RESIDENTS OF THE AREA**

FOM member Ian Trass (Masterton) is prepared to conduct oral history interviews for anyone who would like to record their voice and stories for posterity. For further information please contact him at [trassis2@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:trassis2@yahoo.co.nz) or phone 06 3770760.

#### **EMAIL ADDRESSES**

If you receive this newsletter by mail but do have an email address would you please advise us? Also, if you are moving house or changing your email address, would you please put us on your list of people you notify? [www.scandinaviantrail.org.nz](http://www.scandinaviantrail.org.nz) Email: [info@scandinaviantrail.org.nz](mailto:info@scandinaviantrail.org.nz)

#### **LETTER SENT TO KAY**

Dear Kay

At our Annual General Meeting in July, a motion was moved to elect you as an Honorary Life Member. This was passed unanimously.

We do this in recognition of your dedication, knowledge, skills and unconditional generosity to Friends of Mauriceville. Your initiative in establishing Friends of Mauriceville and encouraging us to become involved in researching and preserving the historic and cultural heritage of the Mauriceville and Hastwell Districts are very much appreciated.

You spent many years researching material, editing and publishing Whispering Roads and Rainbows Over Mauriceville. The funds from the sale of these books will enable Friends of Mauriceville to proceed with projects relevant to our Society's aims which will provide a rich legacy for the future of the districts and all persons connected with them.

You have been a real inspiration to us all. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Harold Devenport

#### **KAY'S RESPONSE TO FOM REGARDING HER HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP**

The original gates are yet to be brought into town so the hinge straps can be repaired but an approach has been made to the Men's' Shed and they have indicated they may be able to restore the gates for us.

We are always pleased to see the church still being used as it was last year for the baptism of a child of Norwegian and Swedish descent with relatives from Sweden in attendance.

An ex film student thought it a beautiful location and asked permission to shoot some scenes for a film there at Queen's Birthday weekend. He has kindly given a donation of \$100 in appreciation.

N & S Hoar

## **MAURICEVILLE WEST LUTHERAN CHURCH AND BURIAL GROUNDS**

This is the little church and gravesites sitting quietly on the hill opposite the old Mauriceville West School.

The Lutheran Church and Burial Grounds at Mauriceville West are held in ownership by a Trust. The current trustees are congregational members of St Francis Lutheran Church and they have responsibility and authority for its care.

Our congregation though is now very small and we do not use the church as often as we used to. The trustees are currently reviewing the best way to create a sustainable structure that will protect this valuable heritage into the future.

One part of this process is to assess just how important the church and burial ground is to the people of Mauriceville and the trustees would like some feedback from the community.

Though the burial ground and records date back to 1884 the existing church is not of significant historic value as it was only built in 1957. For the Scandinavian settlers of the region with a dominantly Lutheran faith, it was hugely important for their community and as such the historic value of the burial grounds does not need any emphasis.

Today however, the maintenance of both church and burial grounds is a significant challenge, as all trustees and congregational members live away from Mauriceville. The front lawn requires regular mowing and graves kept tidy. Thanks to locals the burial grounds are regularly grazed with sheep but the church itself will soon require repainting.

Visitors regularly note in the visitors' book how they enjoy having access to the church and it is with grace we have not suffered in anyway by leaving it unlocked. However we did have a recent disturbance there that concerns us so we appeal to locals to please keep an eye out for any odd activity as you are passing.

So what are we asking? As trustees we have some hard questions to ask and answer. We cannot continue as we are. Do you want to help us? Is it of great or little importance to you? How would you feel if the church building was no longer there? We would welcome any feedback from FOM members and locals as we progress these issues. Feel free to contact us. 06 3049088 or

[bjfarley@clear.net.nz](mailto:bjfarley@clear.net.nz)

Josephine & Bruce Farley (Trustees)

**KOPUARANGA HALL**

Good evening Harold:

Well, not many emails I receive make me burst into tears, but yours did! My grateful thanks to you and to all other Friends of Mauriceville for awarding me this wonderful and unexpected honour.

I treasure it very deeply. I shall frame the certificate and keep your beautiful letter as a permanent reminder of many happy years working in and around Mauriceville -- collecting stories, walking up the steep hill to Mauriceville North Church, or visiting the cemeteries and beautiful old school in Mauriceville West.

I am also grateful to Jean Thompson-Church. Jean saw my bi-fold brochure on Footsteps through the Forty Mile Bush and dropped in to New Zealand Pacific Studio one day to suggest I produce a slightly larger one on the Seventy Mile Bush. That turned into the marathon of Whispering Roads. It caused more sleepless nights than any other project I've worked on because there was so much research to do and so little time to do it in! Without the deadline of the upcoming Scandinavian Festival in Dannevirke and my wish not to disappoint you all, I would never have finished it!

Your timing was also wonderful, because I am engaged at present in the second year of a hard struggle to prevent a cement plant from being set up on our South Vallejo waterfront, very close to a residential area. It is a David and Goliath battle, with no victory in sight. Your letter was a great reminder that the work of preserving our landscape and our stories is always continuing, and that we should never quit because a new 'dragon' has appeared. Do you remember the idea some years ago of having a reservoir in South Road, that would have turned the cemetery into an island?

I wish Friends of Mauriceville the greatest success in your continuing efforts to preserve your wonderful district heritage. And I look forward to catching up on my next return visit to the Wairarapa.

As a footnote: New Zealand Pacific Studio will be going on the market shortly, since co-owners and patrons Lynette and Ian Dewes moved to south of Masterton last year. It could be a wonderful location for visiting Scandinavian artists and writers, along with other Kiwi and international artists in residence. I am hopeful that new patrons may appear. And I am happy to remain a part owner, since my library, many artworks and a big chunk of my soul still lives there.

Once again, my thanks and love to you all.

Kay