



FRIENDS OF MAURICEVILLE NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2020

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.

The Eleventh Annual General Meeting of The Friends of Mauriceville Inc. was held on 2 August 2020 at 1.30 pm in the Kopuaranga Hall. Thank you to the eleven people that attended. We appreciate that many members are not local and thank those that sent apologies. To those who indicated they are not in good health our thoughts are with you and we hope the newsletter goes some way in keeping you connected and up to date with developments.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Chairperson: Harold Devenport has kindly agreed to continue in this position meanwhile, as there was only one other nominee, who declined. **Minutes' Secretary** Stuart Hoar **Correspondence Secretary** Stuart Hoar **Treasurer** Peter Christensen **Newsletter Editor** Nerroly Hoar

Many thanks go to Denise for serving so competently as Treasurer for many years. There has been a considerable amount of work involved.

Committee: All members present but others are always welcome to be co-opted on during the year.

CONSTITUTION AMMENDMENT:

The constitution was amended at the AGM so we no longer have Life Membership as an option for **new** members. This was because, after 10 years there is no further income from these members. **However this change does not affect current Life Members in any way.**

Annual Subscriptions remain at \$10

.CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Friends of Mauriceville Inc. is now over 10 years old and I have been Chairman for all that time. I have for the last few years expressed my desire to stand down from the Chairman's role, but nothing has happened. It is not a good thing for executive members to stay in the same position for this amount of time. I would suggest that if no new people step up and take more of these positions on, the Society may have to look at going into recess or winding up.

Plans and signage have been lodged with the Council for their consideration.

Kopuaranga School has been listed as a Grade 2 Historic Building with New Zealand Heritage. Meetings have been held with the Department of Conservation and the Kopuaranga Hall Society regarding the future of the school building.

During the year the Lutheran Church was moved to a site in rural Wairarapa. The Trustees are still in negotiation with the Council regarding the future of the cemetery grounds.

Thank you to Stuart, Nerroly and Denise for their help during the year.

Harold Devenport

TREASURER'S REPORT

I am very grateful to Peter Christensen who has offered to take over the position of Treasurer.

I have been Treasurer since 2010 and have enjoyed the challenge, but I do feel it is time for a change. The busiest time was the launching of Rainbows over Mauriceville, and the pre sell period which was needed so we had sufficient funds to pay for the print. Although this was a busy time, it was also interesting to hear of the connections people had to the Mauriceville West area. Most of the Scandinavians had large families and their descendants are spread far and wide.

At the beginning of this year we had a deposit for a sub from a new member-**R. G. BULLOCK**.

Unfortunately, due to technical issues, we were not receiving messages from the website at that time, therefore we do not have any details for this person. If any of you know the name, would you please email us at info@scandinaviantrail.org.nz

Please remember that subs for this year are due and there are many still outstanding. The best way is to pay direct to our bank account 06-0689-0278183-00- please put your name and sub in the details. If you do need to post-please send them to me-Friends of Mauriceville c/- 5 Whatman Avenue, Masterton 5810. Peter is waiting on the completion of a new house and is enjoying time in his motor home. We will do a hand over once he is settled.

Thanks for the lovely notes I have received with your subs over the years.

Denise Devenport

MAURICEVILLE WEST CHURCH AND CEMETERY REPORT

We finally got to tidy the church site as soon as possible after Covid and throw some grass seed at it. Sadly we must have been a bit too far into autumn, and with rabbits and birds our strike has not met expectations. Spring may surprise us. An initial delay was awaiting an inspection from Heritage NZ to view the site as it had been occupied for over 100years. We finally got this done and they determined all was clear, but then we were into lockdown. We can assure everyone that the church building is being well respected and renovations are going well at its new home in rural Wairarapa. A few items from the church are being incorporated into their build. All the pews have been taken by descendants of families, with four gifted by St Francis to the Mauriceville West School. The bell waits the day when it can be reinstalled on the site as part of the information board we propose. We are still awaiting a response from the Masterton District Council regarding them taking guardianship of the burial ground. We were told it was going to council at a February meeting, and this was after being advised it had already been tabled. It turns out this has not happened yet and we have recently been in discussion with a consultant firm they have employed now to do work on it. It was to go to the council for an early August meeting but we were advised last week (by the consultant) this will not happen now. So, after more than four years the matter has not been placed before council still.

One issue is that it is listed as a designated Lutheran denominational cemetery. We have agreed that we are more than happy to allow it to become a public community cemetery going forward. But it has now come to light that MDC proposes to close the cemetery completely. We have asked that this not be an immediate action and suggest to them they have a responsibility to consult with their community before doing so.

We currently feel unable to do any more development to the burial ground other than our current maintenance, in fear of taking steps that MDC may not approve of, and it may turn out to have been a waste of time and money. So watch this space.

Jo and Bruce Farley Trustees-Mauriceville Lutheran Church and Burial Ground.

MAURICEVILLE NORTH CHURCH

Although the theft of the historic bell was reported to police and well publicised in local newspapers there has been no information forthcoming.

The church trustees were contacted by the new owner of the adjoining farm for permission to place a house within 10 metres of our boundary. This was referred to the Methodist Church of NZ for their consideration.

We have been donated two organs; one from St Francis Lutheran Church and one from people leaving Hastwell. Both are currently stored at the MVW School. We are waiting to have the organ from St Francis transported up to the church when the track is drier. The intention is to keep the original organ at the rear of the church. Many thanks go to Logie Atkinson for finding and moving the organ from Hastwell.

We are incredibly grateful to the MV /Kopuaranga Fair Grants' Committee for \$1500 which will be used for essential maintenance to help keep the church watertight. We are waiting to hear from a builder as to whether any further original windows need replacing. We have done two of the six to date.

Hans Larsen was one of the first trustees of the church in 1881. After him and his wife Karen emigrated from Norway they and their two surviving children were quarantined on Matiu/ Somes Island. A group of about 25 descendants visited the island on the 8 March to learn more about their appalling voyage and conditions on arrival. The weather conditions were perfect for our ferry crossing, picnic and exploration of the island. Unfortunately, it was not possible to extend an open invitation as there were limited places on the public ferry and we didn't want to have to leave anyone stranded on the Eastbourne wharf if the ferry was full! If anyone would like to do this trip independently check out East West Ferry Timetable. There is no charge for Gold Card holders. I am happy to forward you my notes from the talk given. - Nerroly Hoar (Trustee)

MAURICEVILLE WEST HISTORIC SCHOOL Update of Plan and Future Intentions:

We have had a couple of quiet years as Willy and I have dealt with personal health problems.

We have some energy now to get back to the job of restoration and maintenance. Painting will continue when the weather warms up.

During the quiet period, Willy still continued to farm the land and keep the school area tidy.

In March we had a shared meal evening at the school, for all the new families to meet the existing community. Those who attended really enjoyed themselves and are mentioning they are ready for another gathering. We also have a few neighbours who have indicated their intention to help us in the future.

We have quotes for a new roof and to replace the existing pot belly fire that was condemned by the Heat Shop experts. Fundraising will be ongoing until we can meet these needs.

Julianne Buick

TO CONCLUDE: Please give some thought to the future of FOM.

Your membership likely already indicates your personal connections to the area and or your desire to preserve its Scandinavian History.

Feedback is always welcome, as are suggestions for new directions, projects or activities.

We welcome the involvement of new people for fresh ideas, enthusiasm and energy. The current role holders will be more than happy to support and assist you as required.

Since its inception FOM has achieved a great deal: improved road signage, the publication and sale of books recording the history of the area, (thanks to author Dr Kaye Flavell!), Heritage Conservation Reports, essential maintenance on heritage buildings and development of their grounds with improved access, and research on burial grounds with accompanying new signage.

There is of course the potential to do a lot more yet. People seem increasingly interested in their genealogy and our colonial history and many make visits to Mauriceville because of this.

Our Scandinavian settlement, which was specifically for the felling of the 40 mile bush, is quite unique in the history of New Zealand.

So please give some consideration as to where FOM needs to go from here, how, and with whom.

Editor- Nerroly Hoar