

# FRIENDS OF MAURICEVILLE NEWSLETTER

## OCTOBER 2021

*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 12th Annual General Meeting of The Friends of Mauriceville Inc. was held on 10 October 2021 at 1.30 pm in the Kopuaranga Hall. Thank you to the 14 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 at present, our thoughts are with you and we hope the newsletter goes some way in keeping you connected and informed.

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

**Chairperson:** Shaun McGillicuddy

**Secretary / Treasurer / Web Administrator:** Peter Christensen

**Newsletter Coordinator:** Nerrolly Hoar

**Committee:** S&K McGillicuddy, P Christensen, S&N Hoar, W&J Buick, L Atkinson, I Trass, N Dunn, B Ammundsen and P Balle

Many thanks go to the Devenport team of Harold and Denise for so many years at the forefront of FOM Inc. (in fact from its inception in 2008). We hope they leave their roles with many good memories of achievements and the people they have met and worked with. We wish them a well earned, happy retirement from their leadership responsibilities. Being the community minded couple they are, I know they will not be putting their feet up, but continuing with their responsibilities in other organisations.

Thanks also to Stuart for his role as Secretary for the last six years.

Welcome to our new members Shaun and Katrina McGillicuddy. We are grateful for Shaun agreeing to take on the role of Chairperson, which enables FOM to continue moving forward.

### **SUBSCRIPTIONS:**

Annual subscriptions remain at \$10. Payments can be made directly to our bank account  
**ANZ 06-0689-0278183-00 Please remember to add name and subscription in the reference, code, Particulars fields.**

or sent directly to P Christensen 6 Wycliffe Place Masterton 5810

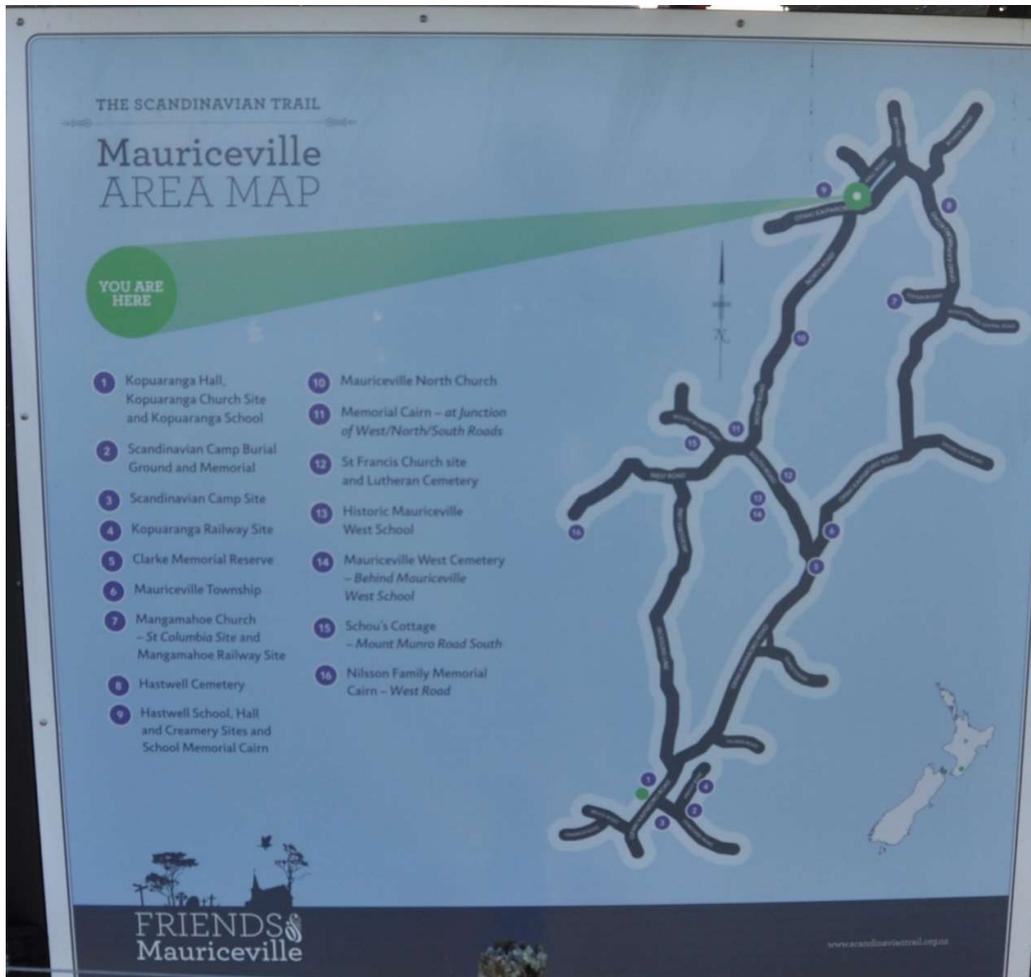
**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Harold Devenport

What a year this has been. I think everyone will remember it as COVID, COVID and more COVID.

I well remember the year 2008 and a gathering of interested people who had connections with the early Scandinavian settlers. We met at Pukaha Mt Bruce to form a society called Friends of Mauriceville. I was voted in as your first Chairman, but little did I think 13 years later I would still be here.



This year FOM has finally got the Heritage Trail signs at Hastwell and Kopuaranga made and erected. Thank you to the Menz Shed for making the structures, Philipa Devenport Johns for the design work and Greenlees Print for the signage. A working bee was held on a cold and wet day. Thanks to Logie for his tractor and posthole digger and supervisors Stuart and Harold along with the official photographer Peter.



Denise and I attended an afternoon arranged by NZ Heritage at the Lutheran Burial Ground and I gave a short talk on FOM's aims. We also sold some copies of Whispering Roads.

Our thanks go to Merv Lehmstedt who has donated a picnic table. This has been installed on the edge of the tennis court at M W School. A plaque acknowledging Merv's gift has been affixed to the table.



My thanks to Peter for stepping up and taking on the Treasurer's role. Peter has also worked with the web designer AJ Hunter to upgrade it.

As you are all aware, unless you operate banking electronically, you get left behind. I am pleased to advise that in future, all our banking will be done electronically.

Because of the uncertain future of FOM, your committee has made the decision not to reprint Rainbows over Mauriceville at this time.

This is my last Chairman's Report as I am not available for re-election. I have enjoyed my time as chairman and what we have achieved. It is now time for a change of leadership.

My special thanks to Stuart, Nerroly, Peter and Denise for their assistance during the year.

I wish FOM all the best for the future

**MAURICEVILLE WEST CHURCH AND CEMETERY REPORT:** Bruce Farley



I can advise that at a meeting in September 2020 that Masterton District Council voted that they:

- i. Receives the proposal from the Mauriceville West Lutheran Church & Burial Ground trustees and St Francis Lutheran Church.
- ii. Agrees in principle to accept the transfer of the St Francis Burial Grounds and church site from the Mauriceville West Lutheran Church & Burial Ground trustees and St Francis Lutheran Church into Council ownership for ongoing administration and care, subject to consultation with the local community.

iii. Consult the local community on whether the burial ground be closed and managed as an historic site, remain open as a Lutheran Burial Ground or be closed as a denominational burial ground and opened as a community cemetery.

iv. Request a further report, following the consultation, outlining the final recommendation for the future of the burial ground.

Further, (after me requesting feedback re progress last April) we were advised in April 2021 that MDC were needing to consult with the community as per (iii) and then they'd get back to us.

We have heard nothing more or how this consult would take must place. I say I had thought that working through a group like yours would have been a useful part of that process.

**MAURICEVILLE NORTH CHURCH:** Nerroly Hoar



In September the whanau of Paora Ammundsen visited the church for the first time. They were descendents of Ole and Bertha Ammundsen; first settlers who arrived on the England. Their section was opposite the church and the timber for the church came from there. The visitors came from as far away as Auckland to learn about their Norwegian whakapapa. Multigenerational families left with new knowledge and special memories of the day and books! Many thanks go to our member Brian Ammundsen for hosting the visitors.

In February a bus load of visitors from Age Concern visited on a tour of rural churches. I gave them a presentation of the history of the church and personal stories of some of the settlers. There are still many locals yet to learn of the historic Scandinavian heritage of the area and they were a captive audience. The weather was perfect and Stuart used his 4 wheel drive to transport some folk up the hill.

We are pleased to report the church has had a wash down by Brendon and the St Francis organ that was kindly donated to us, has been taken up by Stuart and Mike. The former organ will be kept at the rear of the church.

We felt it important to make succession plans for the church governance and after 34 years I am stepping aside for Jana Seymour who is replacing me as a trustee. Gavin Lister is replacing his older brother Mike and Brendon Larsen will be continuing as the third trustee He has set up a FB page Mauriceville North Church if you wish to check it out.

**.MAURICEVILLE WEST HISTORIC SCHOOL GROUP:** Julianne Buick



Our committee are still doing what we can to raise funds to restore the historic building.

The building has had a complete re-roof of colour-steel.

Many thanks to Mark Buick who gave his time to work with Mark Thornton, the roofing contractor from Eketahuna .It was a great week working with the two Marks.

Jeremy Sharp from the Stihl shop donated the mobile lifter for the job.

By completing the roof, we have exhausted all our funds for now. This year we were unable to purchase ewes for grazing the land. Willy phoned around the district and we have a few wonderful farmers who donated stock for us.

Our neighbourhood is growing with younger families. They are all having babies at the moment. One mum Kelly has indicated a wish to start up a playgroup in the New Year.

We have two jobs on our summer list. Install a safe new log fire and to finish painting the exterior walls. We are waiting for the weather to improve. A new group of people have indicated they will come and help. Our future wish is to upgrade the toilet facilities.

We also think the site would be a great stop over for campervans in the future.

### **KOPUARANGA HALL:** Harold Devenport



Our plans for the year were affected by Covid and the events we had planned to happen when the weather was good had to be postponed until later in the year. We ended up having 3 events over a period of six weeks, so it was busy for all concerned. Our events were a very successful Market Day, a Monster Second Hand Sale and an entertainment evening of Broadway Song and Dance put on by the students of the Jazz Dance and Drama centre of Masterton. As a result of the successful fund raising events, we have been able to have all the spouting on the hall replaced. The next job is to replace rotten weather boards.

We also had some sadness in our hall community with the loss of two of our members, Stuart Kelynack and Roddy McKenzie. There has been huge change in the district with the sale of several farms and also the sale of the St Matthews Church section between the hall and the school.

### **WEBSITE** [www.scandinaviantrail.org.nz](http://www.scandinaviantrail.org.nz) : Peter Christensen

Back in 2008 a website was established in the name of the “Scandinavian Trail”. Over the years various items have been added but these have since been reviewed and upgraded. It is with much pleasure that we have been able to work with AJ Hunter the original designer of the website and include a number of changes. We encourage all members to have a look at the new site and we look forward to any comments.

1. There are an increasing number of people who use their mobile phones to search the internet so it was decided that the upgrade should be written in such a way to make it easier to read on a phone as well as a computer. This has meant the use of scrolling down the page rather than having tabs across the document.
2. We have added in lots of additional information and attached PDF documents which can then be opened with a click rather than having to scroll through them.
3. We have added a number of pictures into a gallery which also appear as a slideshow at the top of the website. Please send us your pictures of the Mauriceville area that we could include on website.
4. We have included the contacts address, phone numbers and email address for other groups associated with the Mauriceville area. Our FOM email is [info@scandinaviantrail.org.nz](mailto:info@scandinaviantrail.org.nz)  
We see that the FOM should operate like an umbrella group and support other groups to promote the interests of Mauriceville.

5. We have included an area of personal stories and this is an area that we would like to see develop with various families writing about their knowledge of the area. Family genealogy is a growing interest to many families and this website should be of assistance to them as well.

6. We have included a contact for which people can use to send in information and photos that can then be approved and added to the website.

7. We also have a form that new members can fill out and pay a small annual subscription of \$10 by using internet banking into our ANZ bank account **06-0689-0278183-00**. (We do still accept cash). We will be looking at ways that membership will have added benefits in the future.

8. We have included PDFs with the names interred at the various cemeteries in the district, plus those on memorial stones.

We look forward to your comments and suggestions about the website and also any stories and pictures you have that can be included in the future. We see this as a working document that is active, informative, and up to date.

**TO CONCLUDE:**

Thank you all for your support, be it local or from afar. Our ancestors would be proud of us, endeavouring to preserve the unique historical and cultural heritage of Mauriceville and ensuring the stories of their hardship and courage remain for future generations.

Nerrolly Hoar

*“A people without the knowledge of their past, origin and culture is like a tree with no roots”*