



CHRIST CHURCH ~ taitā

WELLINGTON REGION'S OLDEST CHURCH

Preservation Post

Newsletter of the
Christ Church Preservation Society (Inc.)

Issue 74 – March 2022

Upcoming Events:

Annual Service

Sunday 26 June, 1.00 pm

Feature family: Fox

Annual General Meeting

Sunday 26 June, 2.00 pm

(following Annual Service)

Welcome to 2022 – another year of uncertainty for all. Let's hope that very soon life will return to some form of normality and we can start to enjoy the freedoms we are used to.

2022 Annual Service & AGM

We are delighted that Bob Fox has agreed to join us, hopefully with members of his extended family, to talk about his connection to Christ Church. The Fox graves at the Church are a real credit to the family.

We strongly encourage members to join us for a short AGM following the

service. The future of Christ Church Taita is in our hands!

Open Day

We welcomed a steady stream of visitors to our Open Day on 31 October 2021, celebrating Wellington Heritage Week. Ian McCulloch's graveyard tour was again popular. Our historic graveyard is the resting place for many Hutt Valley early settlers and the street names can easily be recognised in the headstones. However, in this short time we cannot cover everything and acknowledge there are still many, many early settlers with a close history

to the Church. The Clement family is one of these and thanks to information provided by descendant John Woolford, we have included an obituary for John Clement from 1914.

Christmas Service

Covid Restrictions meant that the David Dell singers were unable to join us for the Christmas Service on 25 November. David Dell sang solo, joined by the small congregation. He declared the new organ to be a real gem!

Visit by Heritage Rose Society

In November Mary and John Stevens hosted a group from the Heritage Rose Society. They were very interested in the rampant climbing rose that covers the Camellia tree to the left of the front entrance to the church. It flowers profusely, just once each year in November/December and is a joy to behold. It is called The Martyrs' Rose - Félicité-Perpétue and was developed by Antoine A. Jacques who was head gardener to the Duc d'Orleans, the future Louis-Philippe I of France, in 1827. It was recently discovered climbing old walls at Alcatraz prison, still strong years after it was planted.

Wendy Routley Seat

After a lot of discussion and planning, the gift of a seat beside the Ashes Wall to remember Wendy Routley who was a very active member of the Society and on the committee, was built in November. Our thanks go to Dave Pretty from Woodville who designed the seat and Bruce Hutton who facilitated the purchase of the native timber; together with a lot of hard work by Dave, Bruce and John Stevens. A suitable plaque has yet to be attached to the seat. This is indeed a fitting memorial to Wendy, along with the

flowering cherries planted behind the ashes wall.



Cover for Font

Dave Pretty, who designed the seat, has also gifted the Church this beautiful cover to fit over the top of the font.



From the treasurer

Although the annual accounts and performance report have not yet been completed, I am pleased to be able to report that we ended our financial year on 31 January with a surplus of about \$10,000. However, all of that came from gains on our investments. The reality is that we cannot expect this in the current year and are more than

likely going to see a loss in value in our investment portfolios.

The maintenance of the church and grounds will require considerable expenditure in the current year, with the cost of completing the boundary fence on the northern boundary, some major tree trimming and the ongoing need to keep the church in good condition.

Our special thanks to Placemakers Hutt City which has agreed to donate the materials for the fence.

Last year I asked all the families connected to the church to consider increasing our number of life members by signing up members of the next generation. Only one family, not an original settler family, responded to this challenge. If the Preservation Society is to continue to be able to manage and preserve our heritage, our families must step up and contribute both financially and by promoting involvement by available family members. We are at a crossroads. Can we move forward with confidence that the necessary support is there, or do we face the possibility that we will see a decline in the ability of the society to care for our taonga at Christ Church?

John Stevens

Early Settler – John Clement

On 03 November 1914 the Evening Post recorded - AN EARLY PIONEER - FUNERAL OF MR JOHN CLEMENT - Old identities assembled in large numbers at Taita, Lower Hutt, on Sunday, to pay their last respects to the memory of the late Mr John

Clement, one of Wellington's earliest pioneers. The late Mr Clement was an ardent worker in the cause of Methodism, and among those present at the funeral were the Rev. C J Dawson and Mr. C M Luke, who had been acquainted with deceased and his work for many years past. Prior to the funeral Mr. Luke delivered an appropriate address at the home, laying stress on deceased's long and faithful services to the church. Mr. Dawson led in prayer, while hymns suitable to the occasion were sung. The service at the Taita cemetery was conducted by the Rev W Beckett, assisted by the Rev. J J Lewis, of Petone.

The late Mr. Clement arrived in Wellington as far back as 1849, and although he made his home in the Hutt Valley, he was well known by early Wellingtonians, mainly by reason of his association with the Methodist Church. He saw Wellington grow from a mere village to its present proportions, and remembered when there was no Lambton-quay worthy of the name. When visited by a Post reporter some months ago, Mr. Clement related many of his early experiences, and was particularly proud of the fact that at one time he walked regularly every Sunday from Taita to Wellington, where he conducted church services, returning to his home by foot the same day.

John Clement was buried beside his wife Sarah at Christ Church, Taita. Clement Grove in Taita was named for John Clement by the Lower Hutt City Council in 1949.

John and Sarah had 14 children, nine boys and five girls. Of the 14, only seven had issue, five of them boys and there are many descendants with the Clement surname in New Zealand today.

My last newsletter

As indicated in the October Preservation Post, I will be standing down as Secretary of the Society as at the AGM. This also means I will no longer produce the Preservation Post.

I see my first Post was Issue 30 in May 2005. 17 years later we are at Number 74! Things have changed considerably in that time – there are very few ‘snail mail’ members – most of you receiving by email. With the rising cost of postage it would be prohibitive to do this now.

Trying to find interesting articles has at times been a challenge. However, I hope you have enjoyed the offerings over the years. It has been fun and I have made some very interesting contacts.

Janice Henson



Weddings

5 February

Rebecca Oliver to Richard Berry

12 February

Lorraine Berry to John Baker

Bequests for Christ Church Taita

Including a bequest for The Christ Church Preservation Society is a wonderful way to honour those who have gone before us and to ensure that we can continue to preserve and develop Christ Church.

Ashes Wall

A niche in our Ashes Wall costs just \$750.00 plus GST. For further details email: info@christ-church.org.nz.

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