



NEWSLETTER

August 2024. Number 120

NEXT MEETING -

The Blockhouse Bay Historical Society next meeting is our AGM on Wednesday 7th August at 1.15 pm in the Community Centre.

PREMIER VIDEO SCREENING

- Straight after our brief AGM, including nomination and election of 2024-25 committee members, we are delighted to present a video compilation entitled: Blockhouse Bay - Personalities & Place, followed by a round-the-table complimentary afternoon tea. A chance for all of us to discuss and share ideas about what we as a group would like to see happen over the coming year.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Everyone in the Bay will have noticed the changes afoot at our community centre. Surrounded by scaffolding shrouded in white for some months now, we are eager to see the improvements and repairs completed. However, another change took place there that perhaps you may not have been unaware of. Around July last year, the Iona Scout Group quietly ceased to be. After an incredible 64 years serving the children of the Bay, 45 of those years in their purpose built Den beneath the centre.

We would like to thank Maree Fraser & Stephanie O'Hanlon, Co-Managers of Blockhouse Bay Community Centre for enabling us to rescue the precious Log Books, photos and memorabilia left behind. This is a treasure trove of memories - photos, newspaper clippings, activity logs - written by leaders and the children themselves. The most comprehensive of these being the Iona No.1 Cub Pack Log Book, compiled between 1962 - 1979. They are a testament to the dedication and hard work of countless volunteers - leaders & parent helpers - over the decades. See more about Iona Scouts in the featured newspaper clippings, photos and article below. We would love to hear from you if you, or someone you know, are in any of these.

I believe volunteers are the lifeblood of the community. Sometimes overlooked and taken for granted, we don't realise how important their contribution is until they are gone. For the

volunteers themselves though, the experience can be incredibly rewarding and fun. Unfortunately, the cost of living, long commute times and most of us working well into our late sixties or more, has meant that despite wanting to, many of us feel we are unable to offer our time in this way.

The key thing that hasn't changed, is the importance of having community groups. They are the glue that connects us, the contribution that enriches us and the opportunity to be so much more than the sum of our individual parts!

With this in mind, Blockhouse Bay Historical Society would like to take a fresh look at ways we can encourage and enable as many people as possible - near and far - to be involved in some small way. To feel a sense of belonging and celebration of our collective heritage. For those of you living locally, we would like to re-establish Armanasco House as the 'heart' of our village. A place to meet socially and delve into our local history. We need to be open at a time that is convenient for most people in the community. Perhaps opening on a Saturday for 'Devonshire Tea'? In the spirit of Edy Armanasco and her home baked scones, well remembered by her good friend Sheila Sekula, who celebrated her 101th birthday in May this year!

We would like to create opportunities for everyone to be involved in something particular that interests you. Perhaps you enjoy meeting new people and could give an hour of your time every

Chair; Krystene Vickers; krys@ekiwi.com

Vice Chair; Tony 626 6445 tony.joyce@xtra.co.nz

Secretary; Eileen 627 4416

Treasurer; Anne 627 8619

Life Members;

Eileen Rusden, Yvonne Dabb, Alan Cole and Brian Goodwin

Visit our website; www.blockhousebayhistoricalsociety.com

now & then? Are you a dab hand at baking scones or knitting tea cozies? You may have a specific historic event, building or person you would like to find out more about, write a small article for our newsletter or even give a talk. Are you a jack of all trades who could help out practically? A retired teacher that would enjoy meeting school children when they visit the House? Maybe filing, organising or researching is your happy place - our archive library would love you! Not to mention photography or filming. There really is something for everyone.

With the magic of the internet, smart phones, video calling and the like, all our wonderful members living further afield need not miss out. We want you to feel equally involved and valued. Plans are underway to increase and improve content on our website to give you access to as much information as possible. But we would also love to hear from each of you. Your Blockhouse Bay memories & photos are an important thread in the tapestry of

our community's heritage. Would you like to share a story we could feature in our newsletter? Or better still, share it on video using your smartphone and send us a copy. There is nothing like seeing & hearing a person telling their story - and your grandchildren will love it too!

These are only a few suggestions we have come up with, so far. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas over afternoon tea at the AGM. For those unable to attend, don't miss out on having your say, we would love to hear from you too. Send these to us before the 7 August so we can include them in the discussion.

Many of us doing small things we enjoy, at a time we can spare, can achieve great things together!

Krystene

Iona Scout Group - Six Decades Of Childhood Memories In The Bay

Many who grew up in the Bay will have fond recollections of this local scout group run by dedicated volunteers.

The Iona Scout Group commenced in 1959 - the same year the Auckland Harbour Bridge opened. At this time, Blockhouse Bay was undergoing numerous new developments: housing, roads and schools. Blockhouse Bay Intermediate was established the same year. Lynfield College had opened the year before in 1958.

The group began as a Cub Pack that met in the Iona Presbyterian Church Hall. A cake stall was held to raise money for its first piece of equipment: a copy of 'The Mowgli Stories' by Rudyard Kipling. The foundation Cub Leader (or 'Lady Cub-Master' as they were known then) was Mrs Dora Fryer. Two years later in 1961, a Scout Troop was started and the first Scout Leader was Mr David Gordon.

The longest serving adult leader, someone whose name has become synonymous with Iona Scouts, was Mrs Shirley Goddard. Starting out as a parent helper in 1969, Shirley became a leader in 1971. She retired from her leadership role in Sep 1992 following 23 years of voluntary service! Her husband Bob, was also actively involved for many years. In recognition of their voluntary service, the Community Centre Committee voted to officially name the Den: 'Shirley and Bob Goddard Scout Hall'.



Iona Scout Group photo in the newly named: 'Shirley and Bob Goddard Scout Hall' circa 2014

By 1968 the scout group was the largest in the district, with over 80 members, two Cub Packs, a Scout Troop and a Venturer Unit.

With such large numbers it became necessary for the Group to try and get a larger den, and the committee looked at different ways of achieving this. In 1973 they finally decided to build a new den in the lower ground floor of the new community centre that was planned at the corner of Blockhouse Bay Road and



Iona Scouts No.1 Cub Pack - early 1960's

Log 7 Flag and expedition

Dear Akela,

On Saturday me, Gary, Scott, Kevin, Robin, and Dean went to Lake Pupuke for Aquatic Day. I went with Longeera. The lake was deep. When it started eight of us got into a boat 6 of us, 2 of another pack and one other from another pack. Firstly we got pushed out gang and then we had to put our oars up. Then we put the oars in the rollocks and away we went. We had to push your arms as far ahead of you as possible. Then pull towards you and you go. It was very tiring but good fun. We came second after that. That was good because nobody had been in a boat like that. The canoes were quite good. But it was getting too rough and choppy. I came third after all. The last race was the unlapde race which was best of all. There was twenty boys per boat and one leader. We bent over the side and paddled and splashed. We move quite fast and it was good fun!

Wayde



Scouts farewell long-time leader

Chief Scouts Recommendation 1979, Medal of Merit 1985 and Bar to the Medal of Merit 1991 — all testimony to the 23 years of service Shirley Goddard has given to the Iona Scout Group.

Mrs Goddard, who has three sons involved in the Scout movement, started as a parent-helper for the group and became a leader in 1971.

She has now retired as leader and was farewelled last month, along with assistant cub-leader Nicholas Booth, at a cook-out breakfast held in their honour at the Motu Moana campsite, Green Bay.

Keas, Cubs, Scouts, Venturers and their parents presented Mrs Goddard with a weeping cherry tree in recognition of her service to them.

Mrs Goddard says she has enjoyed her work over the years and says it is nice to see shy boys gain self-confidence.

Some of the more memorable moments for her were the exchange visits to Waitotapu, south of Rotorua.

For 15 years boys went on an annual weekend trip to stay on farms and in forestry areas. Then the country Scouts would travel to Auckland for a weekend of city-life.

Mrs Goddard says the Iona group is an active pack with great support from assistant leaders and parents, but she says it is in need of more boys and an assistant Kea leader (between 6 and 8-year-olds).

Any inquiries ph Lyn 827-6060.



Gypsy Day Camp, Motu Moana - 6 April 1974. Gregory Smith & Geoff Medland get down to business pitching their gypsy caravan. (Above).

Iona Scout Group outing - 2011. No names supplied.



Cub Aquatic Day at Lake Pupuke - 3 March 1973. Back row from left: Scott Rogers, Kevin Dove and Dean Summerfield. Front from left: Gary Carseldine, Robin Pinner & Wayde Bull.



This is 10-year-old Kevin Walden, of Blockhouse Bay—a brave boy.

The letter he is holding is from Major-General Sir William Gentry, the deputy-Dominion Chief Scout.

It's a letter of commendation for Kevin's quick action and presence of mind in rescuing a three-year-old girl from drowning at Raglan earlier this year.

The girl had wandered into the water and was carried away by a strong undertow. Kevin saw her struggling, immediately swam out, grabbed her and dragged her ashore.

He is a member of the Iona Cub Pack and he received the letter before 50 people in the Iona Church Hall last night.

Blockhouse Bay scouts off to Jamboree



Three Blockhouse Bay scouts left home last week for the World Jamboree to be held in Idaho, United States later this month. They were members of a contingent of 23 New Zealand scouts who are taking part in this event and all funds for their trip were raised by the boys themselves. They were helped by other scouts, cubs, parents and friends of the four troops in the district.

Left to right in the lower picture are Brian McCarthy, Pat Chamley and Terry Hobin. By himself is Mr David Gordon, scoutmaster of the Motu Moana Troop who is attending the jamboree at his own expense and the Maori boy is Pataka Bush of Hamilton, another of the scouts going to America.

The other photo shows members of the party practising Maori arts.



Left: Iona Cub Day - 2003. Angela, Chloe, Tony & Josh (not necessarily in the right order)



Excursion to RNZAF Base, Hobsonville - 31 August 1972. Pictured: Kevin Hogan, Gary Carseldine, Geoffrey Medland, Wayde Bull, Brett Davis and three members of the No.2 Pack.

Exminster Street. The estimated cost was \$20,000.00. A huge amount for a scout group to raise. Now with over 100 members, the Committee agreed to push ahead and raise the money.

During the years that followed the group worked very hard and enthusiastically to raise the funds needed for the new den. A variety of fundraising efforts were tried: fairs, leaflet deliveries, housie evenings, group bookings to shows, golf and tennis tournaments, fashion parades, bottle-drives, car trials, wine and cheese evenings, mandarin sales and garage sales... However, the best remembered method were sales of chicken manure (held every year) and between the mid 1970's and 1980's Iona became very well known as 'the group who sold chicken manure'.

By 1976 there was much excitement when construction began and the new den seemed to be getting closer, with some of the committee members actually taking part in the building work.



*Iona Scouts giving away 60 jars of homemade marmalade to elderly residents - 22 July 1978
Standing from left: Graeme Lucas, Sean Craig, Neil Waddington, Jarrod Oakes & Zane Summerfield. Front from left: William Cooper, Karl Flaxman & Mark Waddington*

Finally the first meeting was held there on 20 July 1978, by one of the Cub Packs, with the other sections following soon after. The committee still had to work hard to apply the finishing touches to bring the den up to standard for its official opening.

The big day was Saturday 26 November 1978. The den was officially opened by the mayor of Auckland Sir Dove Myer-Robinson and dedicated by the Rev. Ken Baillie, Foundation Minister of the Iona Church and Chairman of the Groups first meeting 19 years earlier. The plaque adjacent to the entry door today was unveiled, marking the Iona Den officially open.

In July 1984, the Group reached 25 years of age and a reunion was held along with a special service at Iona Church.

Then in 1985 came another milestone, with the advent of Kea Scouts for 6 and 7 year olds, the Iona Kea Club was formed.

When there have been two Cub packs operating, they're called the MacDonald and Gordon packs, in honour of two of the Groups hardest working committee members. Mr Roy MacDonald served on the Group Committee for an amazing 20 years, and was present at the very first meeting in 1959, staying right through the busy years while the den was being built. Mr Ron Gordon served as a parent-helper and Committee Member for many years and was the Building-Coordinator for the Group. He personally undertook much of the construction work in the den.

The Iona Scout Group continued to serve children in the Bay until July 2023, when it closed its doors for good after 64 years!



The Expotition to the North Pole - 9 May 1973. Back row from left: Lance Millar, Dean Summerfield, Greg Smith, Greg McLeod, Paul McArthur & Scott Rogers. Middle row: Keith Jones, Bruce Topliss, Gary Carseldine, Ian Sauvarin, Peter Baldry & Wayne Bull. Front row: Ian Waddington, Robert Nolan, David Brown, Geoffrey Medland, Sean McLeod & Robin Pinner.



Explorer's Badge Hike through Blockhouse Bay and Green Bay - 1 December 1979. Those who took part were: Arran & Jarrod Robinson, Mark & Jamie Calvert, Adam Shirley, Mark Waddington, George Douglas, Mark Pengelly, Stuart Turner, Gary Erkell, Alexander Scripps, Toomai (Jum Lorch), Bagheeron (Margaret Calvert) & Akela.

'A brief history of the Iona Scout Group' (author unknown), originally written for the 35th Birthday Celebration on 4 Aug 1994; edited & expanded by K. Vickers (2024)