

NEXT MEETING -

The Blockhouse Bay Historical Society next meeting is on Wednesday 4th December at 1.15 pm. in the Community Centre.

Guest Speaker - Ahoy Maties. Blockhouse Bay has a long association with sea and sailing. So, we are delighted to welcome Frances Walsh from the Maritime Museum as our guest speaker. Frances is an award-winning writer, editor and researcher who has had a long career in journalism, including writing for many of New Zealand's leading magazines. Her social history *Inside Stories: A History of the New Zealand Housewife 1890–1975* was published in 2011. She currently works as the in-house writer for the New Zealand Maritime Museum Hui te Ananui a Tangaroa.

Local Village News

Christmas in Candyland is taking place on Sunday 8th December. It will be held on the Green and this is a great opportunity to encourage visitors to Armanasco House. It will be open from 9am – 2 pm. If you are able to volunteer for some or all of that time we would love to hear from you. Contact Mary Marshall on marymarshall55@gmail.com

A Friends and Kaitiaki of Blockhouse Bay Beach has been set up. This group aims to protect and improve Blockhouse Bay and Green Bay Beaches, Gittos Domain and Taunton Tce. Volunteers are needed for tree planting, cleaning up rubbish, pest control and weeding - through a regular schedule of working bees. You can find more information on Facebook by searching Friends and Kaitiaki of Blockhouse Bay Beach or emailing friendsandkaitiakiobhb@gmail.com

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Mystery Corner

Do you have something of an historical nature that is a mystery? Maybe a photo of people with no names or date. Or are you trying to find a long lost relative? Or who used to live in your current home in Blockhouse Bay?

We are starting a Mystery Corner. Send us the photo or question that is puzzling you - to Mary Marshall (marymarshall55@gmail.com) and we will throw it over the membership to see if anyone knows the answer.

Wishing you and your families all the best for Christmas and the New Year.



Krystene Vickers; krys@ekiwi.com
Mary Marshall; marymarshall55@gmail.com
Anne Bell; 627 8619
Tony Joyce; 626 6445 tony.joyce@xtra.co.nz

Life Members;
Eileen Rusden, Yvonne Dabb, Alan Cole & Brian Goodwin

Visit our website;
www.blockhousebayhistoricalsociety.com



1994



HOW DO YOU DO?: Queen Elizabeth I (Joy Watson) is flanked by her official friends Dianne Day (left) and Stephanie Paul at the popular Elizabethan banquet.

Elizabethan Antics

"Queen Elizabeth Slept Here" is a proud sign at many stately homes in England. Elizabeth I was renowned for touring around the country and cadging a bed for a night or two. She didn't sleep in Blockhouse Bay but she did dine here, after a day's hunting in Craig Avon Park. On 20 September 1997 Elizabeth I (aka Joy Watson) presided at a medieval banquet in her honour. Along with her courtiers were knights, jesters, singers, minstrels, actors, fighters and of course a plentiful feast.

The Master of Revels welcomed the 100 guests. The banquet was a noisy, jubilant affair with much quaffing and toasting. The audience response when an official yelled "Drink Ale" was "Wass Ale".

Medieval dancing was organised by the Society of Creative Anachronism and a brawl was started by the Sword and Shield Society. Guests were swept into dancing and music whilst actors struck up arguments and even started a sword fight that ended in a gory death.

Sir John Harrington, inventor of the Elizabethan toilet, was knighted for his hard work but was not included in the Privy Council. Of course, no Elizabethan banquet was complete with a Shakespearian item led by Ken Porter.

Music filled the evening - singers and instrumental. Not to be outdone the guests participated in sea shanties such as "What Shall We Do with the Drunken Sailor" and "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean".

The evening was a great success. It didn't raise a lot of money - \$461.96 to be exact. At least, unlike many of the stately homes who hosted Elizabeth I, they did not go bankrupt whilst doing so.

The Elizabethan banquet was organized on behalf of the Blockhouse Bay Community Centre, mainly by another Elizabeth - Elizabeth or Betty Noffke.

Betty was a musician and piano teacher and an active committee member of the Blockhouse Bay Community Centre. Music ran in the family as her father, Ramon Opie, was a tenor singer, with an opera career in NZ, Australia and the UK.

She became a registered music teacher in the early 1980s and taught a studio of piano students from beginners to accomplished learners.

For a number of years Betty produced a musical play for her students to perform at an end of year concert. She would arrange music, make costumes, and fabricate sets for the play to be performed at a local Blockhouse Bay venue. The programme for Christmas 1980 shows that Brian and Hetty Goodwin's daughter, Jenni, played an item from Grasshopper Dance in this recital.

Betty was elected to the Institute of Registered Music Teachers (IRMT) Board in the late 1980s and held a range of positions. Betty was made a Fellow of the Institute of Registered Music teachers. She convened their centennial conference in Auckland and compiled and wrote a history of IRMT in Auckland for this event. On 9 October 2018 she was presented with QSM for her Services to Music.

Betty also developed and convened the West Auckland Student Performers Group to improve access to performance opportunities for young students in the area. She launched the West Auckland Performing Arts Competitions.

Betty and the Blockhouse Bay Community Centre Manager at the time, led the initiative to acquire a performance-grand piano for the Centre for the staging of WAPAC. A Grand Variety Show including items by her pupils was presented to raise money for this. Betty was passionate to ensure the longevity of the competitions for teachers and students.

Her students ranged from beginners to accomplished learners and she held a range of positions on the Institute of Registered Music Teachers (IRMT) Board.

Betty was born in Blockhouse Bay in 1940. She passed away recently. She will be remembered by her many pupils over the years.



Betty Noffke receiving her QSM 2018