Kapiti Coast MUSEUM

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2025

David Barber - Foreign Correspondent

A recently installed display in the museum tells the story of some of David's working life, including a world map pin-pointing the countries he's worked in. One of his books is available to peruse. David lives in Waikanae.

David Barber was one of New Zealand's most travelled journalists. He reported from 55 countries as a foreign correspondent for the NZ Press Association (disbanded in 2011) and also on a free lance basis for some of the world's top newspapers, eg., The Independent (London), the Sydney Morning Herald, The Age (Melbourne), the South China Post (Hong Kong) and the German Press Agency (DPA). He was also on board HMNZS Otago when it was sent by Prime Minister Norman Kirk to protest against French nuclear testing in the Pacific in 1973.

David spent 60 years in the newspaper business and wrote three volumes of memoirs after he retired. Learn more about David's exploits in the museum.

From the Chair's Notepad – Autumn 2025

Greetings to all members of the Kāpiti Coast Museum. Well, winter is now on the way and the nights are closing in as they do at this time of year. While we may not be looking forward to the cooler days and reduced hours of daylight, from the Museum's point of view it is a time of opportunity. People are looking for activities under cover and what better activity to do on a wintry afternoon than to visit the Kāpiti Coast Museum!

Firstly, I would like to talk about Health & Safety. As a small, volunteer run Museum we are not required to follow the myriad laws and regulations that are an obligation for larger enterprises and employers. Our landlord, the Kāpiti Coast District Council, does have an obligation to ensure our Museum building is safe for us as tenants and accordingly, it's contractor will be undertaking a fire safety audit again very shortly.

That said we do have an obligation to look after each other when spending time at the Museum and to notice and report any risks that we think might cause harm to ourselves or visitors. Above all we want to keep ourselves and our visitors safe as far as reasonably possible. Recently, we have put a copy of an Emergency Evacuation Procedure up next to our H&S Policy on the cupboard door behind the Reception desk. Please have a look at both 1 pagers and become aware of the correct course of action in the unlikely event of an emergency of any sort. If you are unsure of anything on the Evacuation Procedure don't hesitate to ask myself or any Committee member.

While mentioning things that are happening in the Reception area at the Museum:

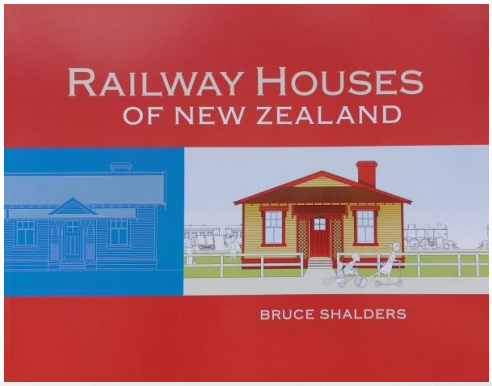
(1) Committee member Dee Halliday has drawn up some new monthly forms to help us track visitor numbers and these will be held at the Reception desk. The form will also make it easy to record details of where visitors have come from – local, wider Wellington region, rest of NZ or overseas.
(2) We have also designed new membership application forms that conform with the requirements of our updated Constitution and in line with the Incorporated Societies Act (2022). Those interested in becoming a member can now apply on-line on our website or fill in a new hard copy application form which will be available at the Reception desk.

We are being asked to report on performance measures such as visitor numbers by our funders while the Committee finds the visitor information helpful in forward planning.
In the last newsletter I mentioned the hard work going into the upgrade of the Kāpiti Coast Museum website. It was pleasing that the new website was finally able to go live in March and if you haven't had a look yet you can find it at **https://www.kapiticoastmuseum.org.nz/** . While not all of us are fans of social media, there is no doubt that this is the best way to grab the attention of the younger generations which is one of our strategic objectives. I would like to thank our website developer Tiziana Stoto and our Committee members Dee Halliday and Rob Adams for their commitment to the website project. Dee is also now looking after the Museum's Facebook and Instagram accounts with more posts than we managed in the past. If you have any new information about the Museum or beyond in the heritage preservation world, do let Dee know.

As always, if you are enjoying being a member of or volunteering for our Kāpiti Coast Museum don't forget to encourage friends, relations, neighbours and any interested party to become a member or volunteer and join the team.

With thanks to all our volunteers, members and supporters.

Neville Queree
Chair



The Waikanae Railway House

A new book in our library is 'Railway Houses of New Zealand'. There are many of these homes up and down the country. One in Waikanae was obstructing visibility at the Elizabeth St railway crossing, so, in 1938 it was moved across the tracks. There are some great photographs recording this action. Below are three, but there are more in the book.
This house is no longer near the railway station. Does anyone know what happened to it?

Waikanae House Move

To improve visibility at a level crossing, on Sunday 10 April 1938 railway house number 225 was moved from one side of Waikanae railway yard to the other. This was achieved using block and tackle and a steam winch that was mounted on an old M class wagon. Progress of the move was recorded by engine-driver and photographer J D Buckley. This fine series of photographs of the move is held in the New Zealand Railway and Locomotive Society archive at Ava.

1. House 225 has been lifted from its piles then lowered onto a large timber frame ready to be skidded across the railway yard to its new site.

2. The move has been halted to allow a southbound passenger train to pass. The intended path for the house is along the railway lines and then to the right on the temporary track that has been laid in preparation. The steam winch waits ready to haul the house just to the north of the temporary track.

3. With all rail traffic halted the move gets underway.

Kapiti Museum Visit - 9 March 2025

(a note from the newsletter of the Onslow Historical Society)

It's fair to say that we all had a most enjoyable trip to the Kapiti Museum in Waikanae. We discovered an extensive and fascinating collection of memorabilia, photos and dioramas, which very effectively displayed the history of the Kapiti Coast area.

The Elizabeth Street area, where the museum is located in the old Waikanae Post Office building, is the site of the original town centre; the settlement having been established with the coming of the railway in the 1880s.

The layout and display show us what we could do at KATE*, given time. Their display of phone and phone-related items was most inspiring. Also the good storyboard on the railway network in the Waikanae area. A lot of the board covered the Waikanae River crossing, which was first opened in the 1880s. As KATE is just across the road from the local train track, I think a small storyboard at KATE on the history of the Johnsonville line might be a good idea in the future.

George Walter

* KATE is the Khandallah Automatic Telephone Exchange, 86 Khandallah Road, Wellington, a re-purposed building where this Society meets.

MUSEUM HOURS: FRIDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY 1-4PM

PRIVATE & GROUP VISITS BY ARRANGEMENT

PHONE: 04 905-6313
ADDRESS: 9 Elizabeth St, Waikanae
WEBSITE: www.kapiticoastmuseum.org.nz
EMAIL: manager@kapiticoastmuseum.org.nz
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/kapiticoastmuseum
INSTAGRAM: www.instagram.com/museumonkapiticoast/

Colour Slides Retrieved from Storage

We have two boxes of colour slides that have been in storage for many years, and we don't have any record of who they're from. Can you identify any of the people pictured? We think they are from around 1960. One set includes a wedding and the other set includes a European holiday. Information to the museum email address please (see above).

Volunteer Receptionists

When the museum is open we prefer to have 2 people on duty. The committee is finding that each month an extra volunteer or two would be desirable. If you could offer assistance on a once a month basis, please email manager@kapiticoastmuseum.org.nz, and we will discuss how you could help.

New Members:

None forthcoming in the last three months.
We recently emailed members for updated addresses and mobile phone numbers. If you have not yet replied could you please advise details to **manager@kapiticoastmuseum.org.nz**