



MOTAT Society 2024 Annual General Meeting

The MOTAT Society held its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 30th of October in Cropper House. Your committee for the 2024/2025 period was elected and is as follows:

- Makyla Curtis (Chair*)
- Bryna Foster (Deputy Chair*)
- Alan Curtis (Treasurer*)
- Bruce Wild
- Peter Burch
- Bill Rayner
- Scott Pilkington
- Mark Kilpatrick

**Confirmed at the 18 November committee meeting.*

Following the formal proceedings, MOTAT Board member Helen Atkins and MOTAT CEO Stacy Busek provided an update on the Museum's strategic direction and addressed questions from the audience.

This year's Lush Award, presented annually, was awarded to Grant Reay in recognition of his excellent work in aviation restoration projects, notably the DC3 cargo door corrosion removal and repair. Although Grant was unable to attend the meeting, the Chair and Treasurer later presented the award to him.

The evening concluded with supper and an opportunity for attendees to chat and connect. The Committee extends its gratitude to all who attended and looks forward to welcoming you again next year.



Makyla Curtis (Chair) presents Grant Reay with Lush Award in front of the DC3 cargo door – a result of Grant's successful restoration expertise.

Kinder House: A Heritage Gem in Auckland

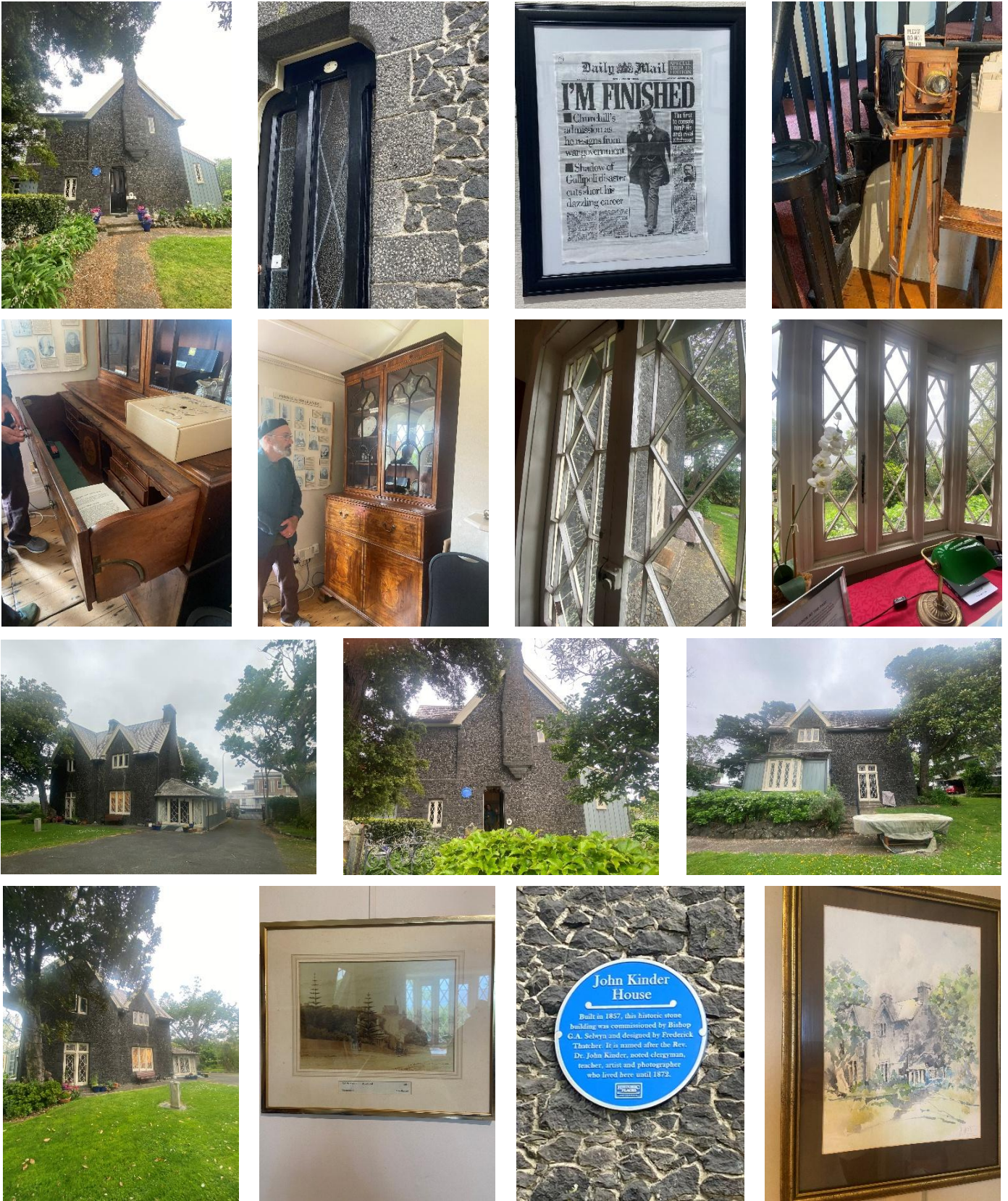
Situated in the heart of Parnell, Auckland's oldest suburb, Kinder House stands as a testament to New Zealand's colonial history. Built in 1857 for John Kinder—a prominent Anglican clergyman, artist, and educator—the house exemplifies the Gothic Revival architectural style. Its distinctive design features, including a solid volcanic stone exterior, steeply pitched roof, and pointed arch windows, lend it a timeless charm. A unique aspect of the house's construction is the addition of lean-tos on either side, intended to bolster the thick stone walls against potential earthquakes. Remarkably, one of the rooms was designed specifically to accommodate an impressive wooden desk, reaching from floor to ceiling.

John Kinder's influence extends far beyond the walls of this historic house. A prolific painter and photographer, he captured New Zealand's early landscapes and settlements with remarkable artistry. Today, many of these works are showcased within Kinder House, offering visitors a glimpse into the country's natural beauty and the evolving communities of the colonial era.

Kinder House also regularly hosts art exhibitions, historical talks, and community events. During the MOTAT Society's visit, the house featured an exhibit on Sir Winston Churchill, highlighting his unique connection to New Zealand—a country he famously never visited.

Managed by the Kinder House Society, the ongoing efforts to maintain and restore this historic gem ensure its stories and significance are preserved for future generations. This dedication keeps Kinder House alive as both a cherished piece of Auckland's heritage and a dynamic space for learning and community engagement.





by Jodie Cawthorne

Historic Houses Summary and Auckland Heritage Maps at Auckland Libraries

This year the Society took a journey through early Auckland via four historic houses – places you always mean to visit but never get around to. In June we visited Highwic. Bruce Wild, architect and Society committee member, wrote a wonderful analysis of the architecture in issue #52 which I encourage you to read. July was Alberton. It was interesting

to compare the architecture of Highwic and Alberton, and in particular, the differences in creature comforts, wealth, and the renovations and extensions of the houses. The double-hung doors at Alberton were of particular interest. In September we visited Ewelme where we explored the cottage's association with MOTAT through the Lush family. Finally, in October, we went to Kinder House (just up the road from Ewelme). Kinder House is the oldest of the four, and the only one to be built of stone. A key architectural feature was the addition of a lean-to on either side in the hope it would hold up the huge stone walls in the case of an earthquake. Highwic, Alberton, and Ewelme, were all built in or around 186. Kinder was built 6 years prior, in 1957.

Together the houses paint a picture of colonial Auckland, a picture of a very specific time. The Auckland of that time is hard to picture beyond the walls of the houses, when at Highwic you step out from under the trees to find 277 Newmarket on the doorstep. And so, the final trip of the year was to the Sir George Grey Special Collections at the public library to find out what Auckland was like at that time. The maps and research librarian unveiled an incredible treasure trove of early Auckland maps which brought to life the streets of Auckland from 1850s to 1920s. A particular treat was the Auckland Fire Insurance maps which detailed every building in Auckland including any outhouses, and the materials the building was made from. The maps had been edited overtime with layers added to reflect the changing city.

If you're interested in taking a look at the library's collection of heritage maps, an extraordinary number of them are available online. If you'd like to see the maps in person, Special Collections is keen to show you, just book an appointment online.

<https://www.aucklandlibraries.govt.nz/pages/library.aspx?library=65&libraryname=Sir%20George%20Grey%20Special%20Collections>

<https://kura.aucklandlibraries.govt.nz/digital/collection/maps>



by Makyla Curtis

MOTAT Print Shop Reopening

The Print Shop team at MOTAT was thrilled to move back into its refreshed workshop on December 1st. The Museum had undertaken a feasibility study on the long-term requirements for a comprehensive printshop and bindery, and we were pleased with the opportunity to be engaged. Realistically, this was envisioned as part of a longer-term, five-year plan. However, in the interim, we collaborated with the Museum to refurbish the existing space.

The plan involved completely emptying the workshop, repainting the walls and floor, and performing minor repairs. Our objective was to redesign the layout to optimise the space for both our team and the public. Over several months, we dedicated our Sunday sessions working on the plan, and a week before the end of November, everything came together.

We repositioned the large equipment (Heidelberg cylinder, Heidelberg platen, Linotype and Ludlow) along one wall, adjusting their spacing for better usability. Additionally, in accordance with our plan, we laid out the type cases and all the attendant equipment (lockup stones, reglets, furniture, etc.) into four back-to-back workstations. This setup allows our team to work more efficiently without having the public pass back and forth behind us while we are working.

As expected - and despite adding three more type cases - we now have significantly improved working spaces, much better circulation areas, and a far better view across the entire workshop.

We're delighted with the results and invite everyone to stop by on a Sunday to see us. The team returns to the print shop on 12th January. See you then!



by Alan Curtis

I remember when: RNZAF Rabaul Incident Memorial

An early MOTAT Society project was the joint venture with the NZ Fighter Pilots Assn to provide the memorial to eight RNZAF pilots lost in January 1945 as part of an air raid on the Japanese base in Rabaul, New Guinea in World War II which is now adjacent to the Sir Keith Park Memorial Hurricane in the front of MOTAT Aviation Hall.

A US Navy veteran Marvin Birk, who was at Green Island, the RNZAF base in the Solomon Islands at the time, sponsored the memorial. The key organiser was the noted Auckland aviation identity Brian Cox, President of the NZ Fighter Pilots Assn, well known to most of the MOTAT Aviation volunteers. Brian was one of the pilots who survived the raid.

Notably at the blessing of the memorial was Mrs. Francis McConnell, the wife of F/L Frank Keefe whose parachuting into Rabaul Harbour from his burning Corsair aircraft initiated the rescue action, along with a large number of old wartime fighter colleagues.

The Society co-ordinated the function at MOTAT and donated the rock slab on which the memorial plaques are mounted. A display related to the incident was part of the museum at the time.

Family members of the lost aircrew still place flowers on the memorial each ANZAC Day.

The text on the memorial reads:

"This memorial is for the memory of eight young New Zealand pilots lost on 15th January 1945. F/L Frank Keefe bailed out from his burning Corsair over Rabaul Harbour in the morning, and later in the day after an unsuccessful rescue attempt, another seven pilots crashed whilst returning to Green Island after flying into a tropical storm in darkness. Five pilots were from No 14 Squadron and three from No 15 Squadron. They were:

<i>F/L F.G. Keefe</i>	<i>F/I B.S May</i>
<i>F/O A.N. Saward</i>	<i>F/Sgt L.J. Munro</i>
<i>F/Sgt. J.S. McArthur</i>	<i>F/L. R.F. Johnson</i>
<i>F/O G. Randell</i>	<i>F/Sgt. R.W. Albrecht</i>

F/L. Frank Keefe was captured, but died whilst prisoner two weeks later, from injuries suffered when his Corsair was hit by ACK ACK during a dive-bombing attack and caught fire.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

This Memorial was sponsored by Marvin Birk of Brooklyn N.Y. who was based on Green Island in the U.S. Navy at the time of this loss and also by members of the NZ Fighter Pilots Assn.201D



Memorial close up



Left: Brian Cox and Mrs McConnell/O'Keefe. Middle and Right: Brian Cox speaking in front of memorial

by Bill Rayner

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Contributions to the MOTAT Society biannual newsletter, The Squeaky Wheel,
can be sent to admin@motatsociety.org.nz