



**Issue 22**  
July 2022



# Auckland Council Archives

## Auckland begins at the Archives

### Welcome

The purpose of this newsletter is to update you on upcoming events and share information about new services, resources, and additions to the archives.

In this issue, we tell you about an exhibition in Auckland Central Library, the Archives' digitisation programme, staff changes and a flood at Orewa.

In addition, we report on a donation of road board records and on heritage bus shelters in Devonport.

#### What's inside this issue:

- The Central area model
- Mauku Road Board records
- Digitisation and accessibility
- The Orewa flood
- Staff goodbyes
- Devonport bus shelters

## The Model City at Auckland Central Library



The Central Area Model in the Model City display on the ground floor of the Central City Library, May 2022.  
Image credit: Liam Appleton.

Currently on display at Central Library is a scale model of central Auckland, built in the late 1960s as a planning tool for staff at Auckland City Council. It forms the centrepiece of an exhibition, 'The Model City', a collaboration between staff from Libraries, Special Collections and Council Archives.

Vicky and Owen from the Archives team were involved researching the history of the model from council records (mostly Works Department subject files in series ACC 219), writing labels for the display cases, helping staff locate relevant archives, as well as reattaching some of the many wooden building blocks which had fallen off over the years. Vicky also managed to find the owner of a flex-lite Modelscope, similar to that used by planners to enable photographs to be taken at street level, and secured its loan.

If you'd like to learn more about the origins of the model, visit the Heritage et AL blog for this post written by Research Librarian Liam Appleton -

[Model City Origins](#)

And if you'd like to see it close up, there's still time! The exhibition runs at Auckland Central Library until 21 July.

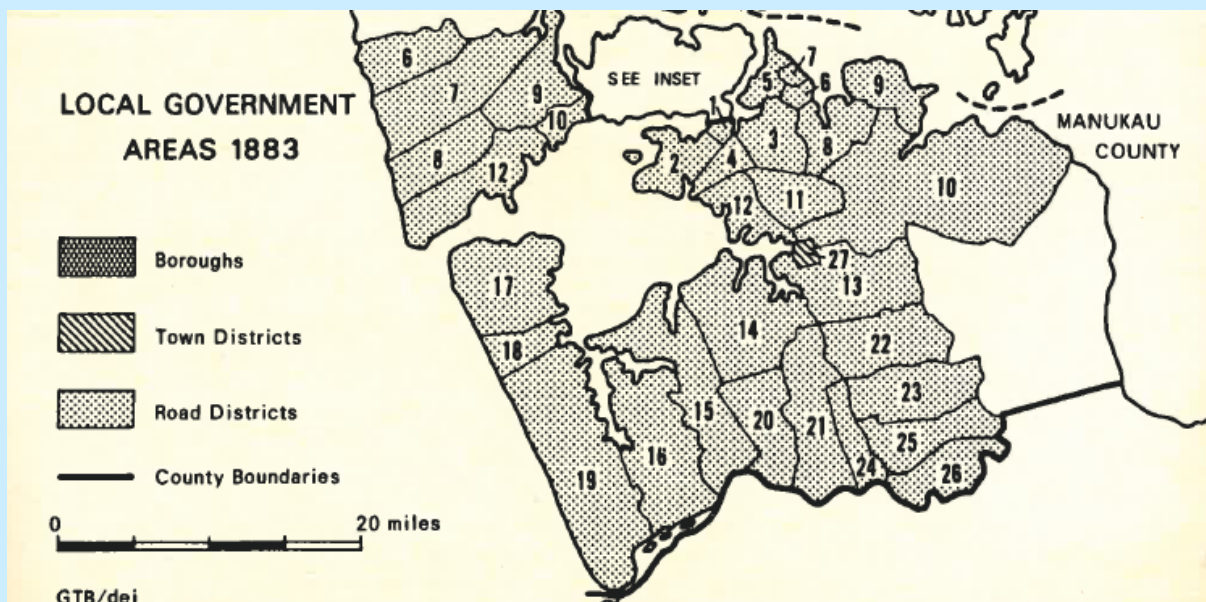




Central Area Model - close up of the Aotea Square area.  
 (Auckland Council Archives, accession AKC 2008 005).

## Mauku Road Board records

We were delighted to get a call from the Pukekohe Library in May asking if we would like some Mauku Road Board records, including a cashbook from 1900, recently donated to the library by the local historical society. The road boards were one of the earliest local-government agencies in New Zealand and provide information useful for social history and family history. The Mauku Road District was part of the Franklin area and is shown as number 15 in the map below:



If you would like to know more about the road boards then check out this article from the Auckland Council website [Road Boards Auckland Council's Ancestors](#).

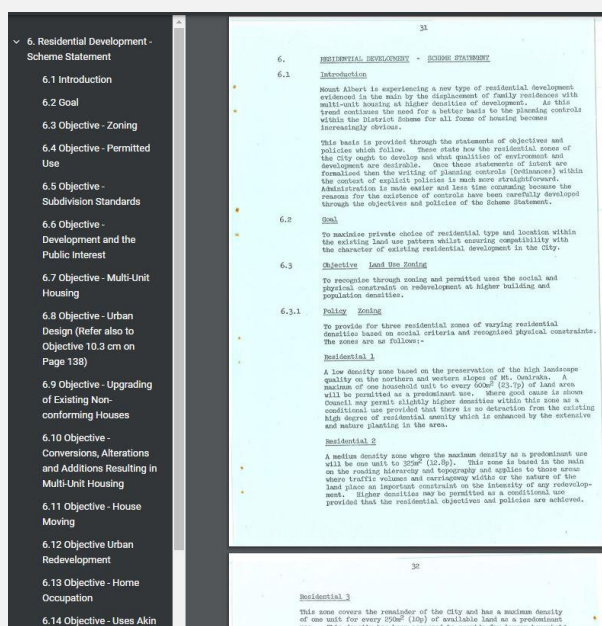
Auckland Council Archives holds the records of local government for the Auckland region. Please contact us if you have or know of any records that might be of interest. We are always grateful for donations of Auckland local-government records.

## Digitisation and accessibility – Aya Oba

There are many reasons why digitisation is important – preservation and access are two of the main reasons and today, I would like to talk a little about access. As we have many different mediums to digitise, it is important to digitise and present items in the most accessible way possible. For example, most documents are in PDF format, and photographs and objects are in jpg or tif format. Also, depending on the size of the volume, photograph or object, the method of digitisation will be different.

Archives are digitised to a high standard and the master file kept as a preservation copy. However, high-quality files are usually very large and inconvenient to access. Therefore, it is essential to create access files and make them available online without losing quality or information.

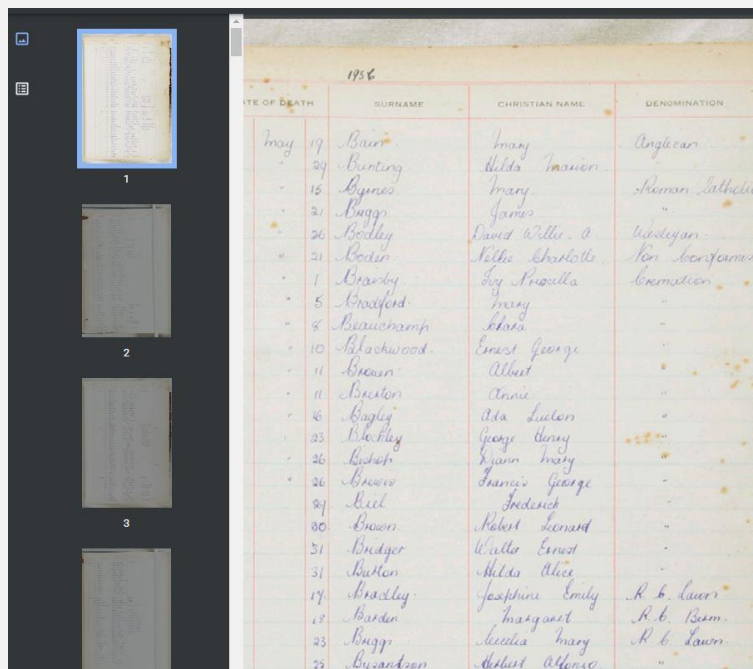
For example, one of our historic District Schemes [Mount Albert City District Scheme Second Review 1979](#) has been digitized as a multi-page PDF split into sections rather than being presented as a 200-page PDF accompanied by a large single PDF of the map. The contents of each section are listed online and bookmarked - this means when opening the PDF, the customer can easily click on the part they need to jump to (see below):



These PDFs were also scanned using optical character recognition (OCR) software, so they are text searchable.

Planning maps have been scanned on our large-format scanner at 600 pixels per inch (PPI) and the size has been reduced for web access.

Another example is the alphabetical index to burials at Waikumete Cemetery between 1956 and 1976 [Indexes Alphabetical 1956-1976](#). It was challenging to present the digitised version at the right file size for the website because the volume was so large and some of the entries were very faint. After several tests and resizing, we have images available in good quality and easily accessible (see below):



1956			
DATE OF DEATH	SURNAME	CHRISTIAN NAME	DENOMINATION
May 19	Bain	Mary	Anglican
29	Bunting	Hilda Marion	"
15	Gyenes	Mary	Roman Catholic
21	Bugg	James	"
26	Bodley	David Willie A	Methodyan
21	Bevan	Nella Charlotte	Non-denominational
1	Brasby	Joy Rosella	Cremation
5	Broadford	Mary	"
8	Brauchamp	Alma	"
10	Blackwood	Ernest George	"
11	Brown	Albert	"
11	Buxton	Annie	"
16	Bagley	Ada Lillian	"
23	Beckley	George Henry	"
26	Bishop	Kyran Mary	"
26	Brown	Thomas George	"
27	Leil	Fredrick	"
30	Brown	Robert Leonard	"
31	Bridger	Walter Ernest	"
31	Bullen	Miles Alice	"
17	Brookley	Josephine Emily	R. C. Roman
18	Burden	Margaret	R. C. Roman
23	Bugg	Lucia Mary	R. C. Roman
25	Byrandon	Robert Alfonso	"

To determine how much to reduce the size of the document and images – there is no one recipe. It depends on the quality of the item, its actual size, whether it is written or typed, how many pages per volume etc., not only the size of the file.

Still, planning how to deliver and present images in the best way possible is one of the favourite parts of my role. Easily accessible and good quality information needs to be available to all of us and we'll keep working on more projects.



## Team effort from records and archives staff

Records and archives staff attended disaster training in 2021. While we need to know how to salvage records and archives after a disaster, we all hope that it is something we won't have to put into practice but...

On 22 March, a severe storm hit Orewa and unfortunately parts of the council building leaked. A large number of cartons containing property records ready for scanning were caught in the deluge.



Led by council's Records team, the recovery effort quickly started. The saturated cartons had to be emptied and the contents separated and spread out to dry. Time was of the essence as mould can germinate within hours of records getting wet, water-soluble inks can run, pages of coated paper glue themselves together and some paper turns irreversibly to papier-mâché.

Ideally, we would assemble a small army to do the work however, due to COVID restrictions, we could only have a maximum of six people on site. Harvey and Keith volunteered from the Archives team with Alana, Imtiaz, Jacqui, and Reuben from the Records Team. We took over the council chambers and part of the cafeteria to spread out the records for drying. The wettest pages needed to be interleaved with paper towels.



With the help of three commercial dehumidifiers running constantly for five days we dried and re-boxed over 165 cartons of property records. Thanks to all who volunteered to be part of the salvage team for their prompt response to this disaster.

## Staff goodbyes

Visitors to Archives may have noticed a few staff changes lately.

Senior Archivist Bruce Symondson retired on 13 April after working in local government archives for over thirty-five years.

Bruce was appointed by Auckland City Council as its first professionally qualified Records and Archives Manager in 1985. An Archives and Records Association of NZ (ARANZ) conference paper by Bruce outlined his first six months' work for the council, including a pragmatic decision initially to focus on 'records management jobs that would yield more rapid and visible improvements in the records more frequently used by Council staff'. He described a basement storage area he inherited as full from floor to ceiling and accompanied by 'an odd assortment of cartons [...] piling up around the floor'. Familiar to archivists and records managers even in the digital age, 'There was a considerable volume of entirely routine records [...] that had only been retained because no-one had thrown them out'.

Bruce had worked for the previous seven years at National Archives (later re-named Archives New Zealand), within a team responsible for appraisal of central government records. He once served as vice president of ARANZ and on its working party on revision of the local government schedule on protected records that arose from the Local Government Act 1974. On leaving Auckland City, Bruce worked as archivist for Waitakere City Council in Henderson before transferring to Auckland Council on the creation of the super city in 2010. Based initially in Henderson, he moved with the archives five years ago to its Takapuna office and last year to Bledisloe House in the CBD. His particular interest was the retention and disposal of records and archives.

Bruce has degrees in history and political science from the Victoria University of Wellington. He once stood as a parliamentary candidate for the NZ Values Party (for the Island Bay electorate), according to Wikipedia, 'the world's first national-level environmentalist party' and forerunner of the present-day Green Party.

The Corporate Archives team will miss his cogent advice, based on many decades of professional experience, and his contributions to team and department meetings, which were to the point and often highly entertaining. We wish him the best for a long and enjoyable retirement.



Bruce at his desk in the Civic Administration Building, July 1992  
[published in the Auckland City Council staff magazine *New Dimensions*, Auckland Council Archives, AKC 402/2d]

Senior Archivist Vicky McCulloch recently left us to start an exciting new role as Archivist at the John Kinder Theological Library in Remuera.

Vicky describes herself as an ‘accidental archivist’. Having earned a diploma in Museum Studies and eighteen months as an assistant at Archives New Zealand, she gained her professional sea legs at the New Zealand National Maritime Museum, where she spent almost eleven years as Registrar (despite this, she claims to have no knowledge of how to sail a yacht).

Vicky was with Council Archives for over ten years, and recently had the added responsibility of co-ordinating Archives’ outreach programme, which included posting many lively and fascinating articles about the archives on social media. We wish her all the very best in her new role.





Conservator Andrea Woods has also left the team.

Andrea first became interested in conservation after studying at the Dunedin School of Art, working for a short time at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. She pursued this interest in paper conservation at the Camberwell College of Arts in London, eventually returning to New Zealand to work with a private paper conservator.

In 2006 she began working as a preservation technician at Auckland City Council Archives, before becoming permanent conservator in 2008.

We thank Andrea for sharing her knowledge and expertise with us and wish her all the best for the future.

## Devonport heritage bus shelters

Devonport is a suburb of Auckland that is blessed with a considerable number of heritage buildings, houses, and other structures. Among these are eight heritage bus shelters that still exist on Lake Road, Old Lake Road, Vauxhall Road, Wesley Street, and Wicklow Road.

The bus shelters were built during the 1930s and 1940s and are similar in design and constructed in the same materials. The roof of each shelter was typically either orange clay tiles or iron painted green. Both sides of the shelter were open with a central partition dividing them. The structure was built of wood and the interiors painted yellow and the exteriors painted green.

The Council minutes show that the driving impetus for the erection and placement of the shelters came from the residents themselves. A prime example is the shelter adjacent to Narrow Neck Beach. On 18 July 1934 Captain G F A Lewin and 18 other residents requested that the bus shelter be built to which council replied that it would favourably consider the proposal if the applicants made a financial contribution. At a meeting on 29 August 1934 a deputation stated that the residents had subscribed £6 towards the cost, the North Shore Transport Co Ltd had agreed to provide approximately a third of the cost, and the Auckland Harbour Board had agreed favourably to consider a donation. The deputation also suggested that the type of shelter be larger than usual and submitted a plan. In subsequent meetings there was some debate about the size of the shelter as the residents pointed out that it would be used by the summer beach visitors as well as residents. The council did agree in the end. The process had taken five months.

Residents' partial contribution to the cost of a bus shelter is a recurring theme at this time as is the partial contribution from the transport companies.

Although the majority of residents approved of the shelters, it was not always the case. Some residents objected to the erection of bus shelters outside their properties. One piece of correspondence points out 'that it will cause undesirable characters to be encouraged to congregate in a place of this nature'. Another correspondent remarks at length about the shelter outside his property: 'a handy gathering place through the night for people of questionable character and doubtful intentions [...] under-age drinkers, school children smokers' etc. Council did agree to remove the central partition and block off the back.

As for these heritage shelters, what is their use today? They serve their original purpose except for the one on Wicklow Road which now has been converted into a Book Exchange that has become highly popular with residents and is a community focal point. Recently, the back section of the shelter on Wesley Street has also been turned into a Book Exchange. Both of these shelters are now decorated with artwork and are looked after by the locals.

Finally, the two shelters at the end of Old Lake Road close to Lake Road were built in 1989. Devonport Borough Council wanted these to be built in the same size and style as the early one at the other end of Old Lake Road (built in 1934, 55 years earlier) except for a roof with clay tiles instead of iron. A nod to the past.



Wicklow Road bus shelter in Devonport re-purposed as a book exchange.  
Image credit: Auckland Council Archives, 6 July 2022.



#### Find out more

Visit: [aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

Enquire: [archives@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:archives@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

Phone: 09 890 2427

Write: Auckland Council, Private Bag 92300

Victoria Street West, Auckland 1142 | DX CX 10032