OTAKI HISTORICAL SOCIETY (INC.)

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# EDITORIAL

TENA KOUTOU katoa. Greetings to our land, Horowhenua, so dense in memories and stories. Greetings to those whose completed lives have become our stories. Greetings to us all, still living, whose lives are stories in the making.

Memory is one of the great badges of being human. Without memory a person is lost, confused, at the mercy of instinct and impulse. History is our common memory, the store of experience out of which we make our decisions, create our art, steer our course, look back with laughter or sadness, and look forward with hope.

In this *Journal* we revisit our memory of Rangiatea, one of the greatest taonga of Aotearoa and record two impulses to action guided by that memory. One is the re-building project; the other is the heke to Rai'atea, the tino (naming place) of Rangiatea church, a journey into the most ancient human history of these islands. We remember friends of the Society whose lives we have shared and admired, and recall people from the region who shaped its history. Someone said: 'There is no history – only biography.' History is not just facts, places and events – it is feelings, beliefs, passions and aspirations, and through the words of Charles Weston, Margaret Thorne and Hubert Ostler we share the values and feelings of our forerunners. Freda Gillstrom, Hazel Blake and John Moffatt remind us of changes many of us have lived through.

But history is also action. Margaret Long, my predecessor, issues a challenge. It is very easy in an historical society to do the safe and easy bit – to celebrate the past without challenging the present. The Kapiti Coast District Council's heritage plan is about active intervention to ensure that our landscape retains the best work of nature and people in this wonderful corner of New Zealand. To be effective it needs people like you, ready to stick their necks out for what they believe.

Finally, thank you to all who have made my task so easy and pleasant, especially Margaret Long and Daphne Meyer. And, especially, thank you to all contributors of articles and illustrations. Your unpaid efforts over the years have built up a record of which any region of New Zealand would be proud.

Anthony Dreaver
Editor