

# EGMONT VILLAGE SCHOOL



81<sup>st</sup> Jubilee

1877 - 1958

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## JUBILEE COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr. H. F. Olson.

Secretary: Mr. F. C. Thomason.

Treasurer: Mrs. J. C. Jones.

Committee: Misses C. Hook, M. Jones, Messrs. E. A. Gyde,  
Chairman Sub-Committee Monday Programme, M. Bishop,  
Chairman Sub-Committee Ball, R. Milham, Chairman Sub-  
Committee Banquet, P. Hinz, L. J. Hoare, J. C. Jones.

History: Rita Atkinson.

## Roll of Honour

1914-1918—

|               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| H. BENNETT    | G. KIDD      |
| B. CARMAN     | S. KIDD      |
| H. CARMAN     | C. LILLEY    |
| A. CHARD      | E. ORR       |
| L. CUNNINGHAM | H. W. ORR    |
| E. DEWHIRST   | R. RONALDSON |
| H. DOHERTY    | W. REEVE     |
| A. KIDD       | R. SYMES     |

1939-1945—

|              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| A. H. BENNY  | F. A. B. MARSH |
| A. E. DRYDEN | J. MAGEE       |
| J. GUILFORD  |                |

## Past Teachers

### INFANT MISTRESSES

|           |                         |
|-----------|-------------------------|
| 1879      | —Miss Drake             |
| 1880-1886 | —Mrs. C. H. Grayling    |
| 1890-1895 | —Miss E. J. Taylor      |
| 1895-1896 | —Miss M. Potts          |
| 1896-1898 | —Miss J. Tuck           |
| 1898-1900 | —Miss A. McDonald       |
| 1900-1901 | —Miss M. Potts          |
| 1901-1902 | —Miss E. Gibson         |
| 1902-1903 | —Miss E. F. Brewer      |
| 1903-1904 | —Miss A. Ballantine     |
| 1904-1905 | —Miss E. Reeve          |
| 1905-1906 | —Miss I. Bunyan         |
| 1906-1907 | —Miss W. Jemison        |
| 1907-1908 | —Miss M. A. Brereton    |
| 1908-1909 | —Miss E. Gibson         |
| 1909-1910 | —Miss M. Stott          |
| 1910-1911 | —Miss M. Fenton         |
| 1911-1917 | —Miss C. Nisbet         |
| 1917-1919 | —Miss I. Jones          |
| 1919-1922 | —Miss A. M. Gibson      |
| 1922-1928 | —Miss F. Roberts        |
| 1928-1929 | —Miss J. Parker         |
| 1929-1931 | —Miss P. Street         |
| 1931-1934 | —Miss J. W. Beattie     |
| 1934-1935 | —Miss E. G. Tippins     |
| 1935-1936 | —Miss A. L. Shannon     |
|           | —Miss Amore             |
| 1937-1945 | —Miss J. Longbottom     |
| 1945-1947 | —Miss S. G. Fairweather |
| 1947-1949 | —Miss B. W. Clausen     |
| 1949-     | —Miss B. Guild          |
| 1949-1951 | —Miss M. O. Smith       |
| 1951-1954 | —Miss E. Dutton         |
| 1954      | —Miss C. Hook           |

### HEAD TEACHERS

|           |                        |
|-----------|------------------------|
| 1877      | —Mr. W. Collis         |
| 1877      | —Mr. R. J. Cattley     |
| 1877-1880 | —Mr. J. Hill           |
| 1880-1886 | —Mr. W. I. Grayling    |
| 1886-1891 | —Miss M. Wrigley       |
| 1891-1895 | —Miss A. Laird         |
| 1895-1911 | —Miss E. Dewhurst      |
| 1911-1912 | —Mr. J. Wilson         |
| 1912-1921 | —Mr. J. A. Auld        |
| 1921-1922 | —Mrs. A. M. Gibson     |
| 1922-1929 | —Mr. F. Butler         |
| 1929-1932 | —Mr. A. Harper         |
| 1932-1937 | —Mr. G. E. Barnes      |
| 1937-1943 | —Mrs. E. Balsom        |
| 1943-1946 | —Mr. N. Heyes          |
| 1946-1954 | —Mr. W. F. R. Atkinson |
| 1954-1958 | —Mr. L. J. Hoare       |
| 1958      | —Mr. D. W. Taylor      |

### TROPHIES WON BY EGMONT VILLAGE SCHOOL

Cuthbert Shield (Agricultural)  
Grounds Nature Study  
Henry Lane Shield  
Trimble Shield (Boys' and Girls'  
Agricultural Clubs), 1928-29-31.  
Margaret Cup  
Trimble Cup  
Ferraday Trophy

## Early School Committees

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- 1877—R. Quarrell, T. Allen, W. Paynter, H. Henderson, R. Speck, A. Chatterton, J. Batten.
- 1879—W. Paynter, R. Quarrell.
- 1880—Ed Olson, W. Batten, J. Henderson.
- 1881—Henry Henderson (Chairman), H. Paynter, W. Batten, J. Crean, R. Price, R. Quarrell, E. Olson.
- 1882—H. Henderson (Chairman), T. Allen, H. Paynter, W. Batten, J. Reeve, E. Olson.
- 1883—W. Batten, H. Henderson, J. Batten, E. Olson.
- 1884—D. Price, A. Marsh, C. Tapp, E. Olson, W. Batten, B. Casel, H. Smith.
- 1885—G. Collingwood (Chairman), R. Jones, J. Hayward, L. Collingwood, A. Marsh, J. Batten, H. Smith.
- 1885 to 1927—No records available.
- 1926—A. O. Powell (Chairman).
- 1927—A. Powell (Chairman), C. Stapleton (Secretary), J. Thomason, W. Guilford, A. Corney.
- 1928—W. J. Guilford (Chairman), C. C. Stapleton (Secretary), H. R. Marsh, J. O. Morton, F. Bridger.
- 1929—H. R. Marsh (Chairman), F. Bridger (Secretary), J. Thomason, C. C. Stapleton, A. J. Dodunski.
- 1930—H. R. Marsh (Chairman), F. Bridger (Secretary), A. J. Dodunski, J. I. Thomason, W. J. Guilford.

## Early School Committees—continued

- 1931—H. R. Marsh (Chairman), F. Bridger (Secretary), A. J. Dodunski, W. J. Guilford, L. J. Salisbury.
- 1932—H. R. Marsh (Chairman), L. J. Guilford (Secretary), W. J. Salisbury, A. J. Dodunski, A. Morton.
- 1933-1936—H. R. Marsh (Chairman), W. J. Guilford, J. O. Morton, W. J. Salisbury, J. Adamson.
- 1938—H. R. Marsh (Chairman), J. O. Morton (Secretary), J. Adamson, W. J. Salisbury, C. G. Meuli.
- 1940—A. J. Dodunski (Chairman), A. H. Morton (Secretary), C. G. Meuli, G. F. Roberts, R. V. Sinclair.
- 1942—A. J. Dodunski (Chairman), A. H. Morton (Secretary), G. F. Roberts, R. V. Sinclair, G. H. Marsh.
- 1944—A. J. Dodunski (Chairman), A. H. Morton (Secretary), S. W. D. Shallard, R. V. Sinclair, G. H. Marsh.
- 1946—J. C. Jones (Chairman), C. W. White (Secretary), C. G. Meuli, R. J. Bowen, W. A. R. Guilford.
- 1948—J. C. Jones (Chairman), C. G. Meuli, C. W. White (Secretary), R. D. Sole, E. B. Messenger.
- 1950—J. C. Jones (Chairman), R. D. Sole (Secretary), R. E. Milham, P. L. Hinz, W. A. R. Guilford.
- 1953—H. F. Olson (Chairman), R. E. Milham (Secretary), P. L. Hinz, R. J. Bowen, E. A. Gyde.
- 1955—H. F. Olson (Chairman), R. E. Milham (Secretary), R. J. Bowen, P. L. Hinz, E. A. Gyde, S. Ashworth.
- 1957-1958—H. F. Olson (Chairman), R. E. Milham (Secretary), C. J. Dodunski, P. L. Hinz, E. A. Gyde.



## JUBILEE REPORT

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On the 7th March, 1957, eleven residents of the district of Egmont Village met in the Egmont Village School to discuss Jubilee Celebrations for our School. Eighty years had passed since the first pupils attended the original school, which was a blockhouse on the present school grounds, and only a short distance from the school which so many of us remember so well. During the evening it was decided to proceed with a School 81st Jubilee, to be held in May, 1958.

On Tuesday, March 26th, an Egmont Village School 81st Jubilee Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Mr. H. F. Olson, and consisted of F. C. Thomason, Secretary, Mrs. Jean Jones, Treasurer, Misses Clare Hook, Margaret Jones, Messrs. E. A. Gyde, P. Hinz, M. Bishop, L. Hoare and J. C. Jones. This committee was immediately enthusiastic and the work and time they so willingly gave was reflected in the ultimate success of this our first Jubilee. Immediate progress was made in the most important work, the formidable task of locating some thousand ex-pupils who were no doubt spread throughout New Zealand. Our inquiries revealed that ex-pupils were living in Australia, South Africa and England. Advertisements were placed in every major newspaper and weekly in New Zealand and, although our main success in location of ex-pupils came from hard work on the part of your committee, I am sure our big advertising programme was worth while. We eventually contacted 700 ex-pupils. We discovered that approximately 200 had passed on and about 100 had only attended the school for a day or a week and we did not attempt to locate them. In locating this high percentage of ex-pupils your committee had laid the foundation for a very successful 81st Jubilee.

Although quietly confident that the Jubilee would be enjoyed by many ex-pupils, not even the most optimistic of our committee imagined that the celebrations would be so successful and thoroughly enjoyed by so many. We had ex-pupils attending from as far as Poriti, Northland, to Christchurch in the south. It was apparent that most of those enjoying the Jubilee had too little time in which to meet their old friends and discuss their many adventures and experiences that they had enjoyed as school pals.

At 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 17th, we had completed our preparations and a glorious sunny day, with snow-clad, magnificent Egmont as a backdrop, the stage was set for what was ultimately described by hundreds as a magnificent show. Mr. H. F. Olson welcomed everyone back to the school, which

no doubt held many happy and treasured memories for you of bygone days. The Jubilee was officially opened by Taranaki Education Board member Mr. Dodney Jones. The Roll was called by various ex-teachers who had taught at Egmont Village during the period of the decade groups, in which they took pleasure in calling up to the dais for presentation of their Jubilee ribbons, lapel badges and Jubilee badge. Together with wives, husbands and friends there were an estimated 600 people present at the Roll Call, after which decade group photos were taken, afternoon tea enjoyed and many drifted happily around the school grounds, pausing to look at the old English oak trees and perhaps remembering their days at school when the leaves fell and later the green shoots gave promise of another Spring.

At 7 p.m. 324 ex-pupils, wives and husbands attended the Jubilee Banquet at Mangorei Memorial Hall. We had as our official guests, Secretary-Manager of the Taranaki Education Board, Mr. R. M. Foggin, and board member for our district, Mr. Rodney Jones. Our caterers had done a magnificent job and the toast list received a very enthusiastic reception. It was a memorable occasion when our two oldest ex-pupils, who had been taught in the old blockhouse, Messrs. Geo. Swan and Alf Gyde, combined to cut the Jubilee cake.

Sunday, May 18th, dawned with the promise of another fine day and at 2 p.m. 200 people attended the Egmont Village Hall for an impressive service, the ministers of various Churches presented a service which will be always remembered for its sincerity and touching beauty.

Monday, May 19th, with the weather still fine, a Sports Day, which allowed present and immediate past pupils to have their fun, was held in the school grounds. This day was very successful socially and financially.

The climax to the celebrations came on Monday evening when an estimated 320 people, their Jubilee badges and ribbons prominently displayed, attended the Jubilee Ball at Mangorei Memorial Hall. Everyone present appeared to really enjoy themselves and a most wonderful evening concluded at 2 a.m. with the singing of Auld Lang Syne.

The committee's greatest reward for the work they had so ably undertaken must be the outstanding success of the Jubilee and they extend to everyone their thanks for help and co-operation received. We hope you will always remember with pleasure the good times and happy friendships renewed at the Egmont Village School 81st Jubilee Celebrations.

F. C. THOMASON, Secretary.



JUBILEE DINNER

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1877-1900





1901-1910

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1911-1920



1921-1930



1931-1940





1941-1950

# *From 'Shank's Pony' . . .*

## *to Modern School Bus*

New Zealand's system of free, secular and compulsory education is now so well established and so taken for granted that it is hard to realise that it was not until 1878 that the Education Act, providing for this system, was passed. Even then, it was practically neglected until 1884. Previous to this there were private schools only and, as most of the early settlers were not over endowed with world wealth, it is easy to see that there would be numbers of adults who could neither read nor write.

In New Plymouth the Provincial Council passed the Commission Ordinance, a commission of enquiry only, and in 1868 an ordinance for making provision for the establishment and maintenance of schools for the province came into being. A few schools were established but funds were small so the system was very imperfect.

In 1874 the Superintendent of the province held meetings in various districts surrounding New Plymouth for the purpose of testing public opinion respecting a projected provincial measure for placing public education on a sound basis by levying a household rate of £1 a year for its support. There was great opposition to this scheme, but nevertheless the Council passed an Education Ordinance dividing the province into two districts, constituting Boards and levying the household rate.

The Taranaki Education Board, as an organisation under the Taranaki Provincial Council, began to function in June, 1874. The immediate cash balance at its disposal was an advance from the Council of £609/11/2. The system of education established by it was not free, secular or compulsory and the curriculum varied with each teacher.

It was less than three years later, on March 5th, 1877, that an application was received by the Education Board from a number of residents in Egmont Village and its vicinity for the establishment of a school in their district. They pointed out that the Egmont block house was available for school purposes and that Mr. Cattley, a certified teacher, was willing to undertake the duties of teacher providing the Board granted a subsidy.

Egmont Village had built its block house in 1868 when there was still some fear of further troubles with the Maoris, though in actual fact all open warfare in the area was well over by this time.

On September 3rd, 1877, the Education Board agreed to set up a school in the block house and to provide it with "the requisite furniture." Mr. R. J. Cattley was appointed as teacher with a subsidy of £50 per annum.

At this time, it seems, parents had to contribute something towards the child's education. The sum was usually 26/- per annum, paid quarterly.

Apparently Mr. Cattley did not stay at the Village School long as Mr. William Collis, who had previously taught at the Wesleyan School in Liardet Street, New Plymouth, and who had afterwards become a teacher under the Education Board, was appointed on October 1st, 1877.

On June 10th, 1878, Mr. J. Hill was appointed subsidised teacher. In May of the following year he applied for increased accommodation and also for full salary and the "usual rent allowance."

The Secretary of the Board was instructed to provide increased accommodation by "removing the partition and by providing extra desks." It seems as though Mr. Hill's request for an increase in salary may have been quietly ignored. I read elsewhere that the Board was inundated with requests for school buildings as soon as it began to function and, with the limited funds at its disposal, did remarkably well. "Teachers' applications for increases in salaries met with but little success," I noted.

On November 17th, 1879, a resolution was carried to the effect that "a school house for the accommodation of 40 children be erected at Egmont Village, that it be provided with the necessary furniture and that the present school house be converted to a teacher's residence."

Some of the prices paid for work done at this time may prove interesting. The cost of building the new school and converting the block house into a residence was £358. Twenty dual desks cost £14 and the cost of fencing the school site was 14/6 a chain. Later an extra shilling a chain was paid for heart of matai posts in place of red pine. As an early pupil

told me the fence was a post and railing one it is easy to see the posts cost considerably less than they would now. In 1881 £2 was paid for clearing the site of makomako. Later an extra £1 was granted for this work. In 1889 a porch was added to the school at a cost of £16, the committee paying half.

The present school house was built in 1904 at a cost of £404. The block house was then demolished, part of it being used on a house in the Village itself while part was used to build a shed on Mr. Manly Marsh's farm on the Egmont Road.

Further additions were made to the school in 1919. While this was being done the children were taught in the hall, the rental for the latter being £2 a week.

Several old pupils have given me their impressions of the school as it was in their time. In the early days bracken fern and scrub pressed close to the school and there was no real playground. The children played hide and seek in and around this and I heard one tale to the effect that on one occasion, at least, the big boys went into the scrub to a point about where the school house is now while one of their number taught them to smoke.

One pupil related how she had come along a bush track to cross the Mangoaraka on a rata log to get to school. Later a fire almost destroyed the log after which a flood washed it away, so she had to go to Inglewood School from then on.

"We came to school along bush tracks that seldom dried out. I had between three and four miles to come," said another ex-pupil. "We used to walk or, in a few instances, ride horse-back. I remember my family coming to Egmont Village. My rather drove us in in a bullock dray."

The same man told me about an early paper chase. The teacher gave the "hares" some old exercise books and sent them off, as he thought, to fill in the lunch hour harmlessly. Away went the hares, laying paper trails, to be followed a little later by the "hounds." School was soon forgotten. They trotted along the bush tracks, crossed the Waiwakaiho and finally came out somewhere about where the Mangorei School now stands. The teacher did not get his pupils back to school until almost 5 p.m.



At about the same period it was usual for the teacher to send out a child to get him a cane from the bush. To make sure it was a good one the teacher first tried it out on the one who cut it. One child decided this was hardly fair so he nicked the supplejack at each notch so it would break when used. It didn't save him. He was promptly sent back to get another.

One of the early teachers, so I was told, had a habit of questioning the pupils outside the school as well as in it to make sure they remembered what they had been taught.

"We used to dodge into the bush if we saw him coming," said my informant with a grin.

Another ex-pupil told me where the hall now stands was once a "convincing ground." When I appeared puzzled he went on to explain that any quarrels that sprang up between the boys at school were settled down the road.

"The winner convinced the loser that he was right," he explained.

He also remembered a man bringing a dancing bear to the corner by the school. The school children paid a penny to see it.

At one time there was a sports ground where the school house now stands. There was a circular course where bicycle races, athletic sports, horse races and foot races were held.

"The whole district turned out, 'bookies' were in attendance and there was a band playing. It was a big day," I was told. "Children's sports were held on the school property across the road."

This same ex-pupil remembered the block house as a teacher's residence. It was L shaped, the kitchen having been added to make the L and the rest of the block house had been partitioned off to make rooms.

"I remember there was a long passageway which seemed to run the length of the house. The rooms opened off it. It also had a cellar underneath and this had been turned into a workshop."

Walking long distances meant nothing to early pupils or, if it comes to that, to their teachers. I have been told that Mr. Grayling used to walk from Egmont Village to New Plymouth for a game of chess.

Mrs. Gow (who taught at the Village when she was Miss McDonald) also told me something of her experiences. She was 16 when she came to the Village and often used to get very homesick. She would have liked to bring her pony so she could ride backwards and forwards but she could not get grazing for it. Nevertheless, every Friday she walked seven miles home and, on Sunday, seven miles back.

"The roads were rough and muddy and not at all like they are now, but I wouldn't have missed my week-end at home for anything so off I went, rain, hail or shine," she said.

The first school roll, it seems, numbered nine, though we have been unable to find a record of these first names. The first rolls are those from the first school and not from the block house. Some of the largest school rolls, as far as I can discover, have been those of 1918 when, with 69 on the roll, it was necessary to place the children three to a seat. In 1937 there were 67, but the present roll (1958) tops both these records for there are now 71 children at the school.

During Mr. Grayling's time those older people who had not had the opportunity of going to school were able to attend night school if they so wished. This was arranged between the adults and the teacher, from what I can discover, and those attending would pay their own fees.

Egmont Village School has always been able to depend on the helpfulness of its school committees as the following achievements show. In 1936 a well was dug and a pump and tank installed to supply the school with drinking water and water for its septic tank system. In February, 1944, Mr. W. J. Polson opened the school swimming baths and in the same year an appeal for the replacement of the old school was referred to the architect. Now, 14 years later, the new school is at last almost completed. In 1953 the concrete basketball area was laid.

The Egmont Village School children (encouraged, no doubt, by their parents and teachers) have always been keen supporters of the Boys' and Girls' Clubs as their successes in competitions clearly testify.

From supplejack cane to the days when corporal punishment is rarely used and a supplejack certainly outlawed; from mud bush tracks to sealed roads; from "shank's pony" to modern school bus; from nine pupils to 71; from converted block house to modern up-to-date school; from scrub to cleared playground; from "hunt the hounds" and "hide and seek" to organised games; so the years march on. And yet, as I listened to the old pupils reminiscing at the Jubilee, I began to doubt whether the children of today are so very much different from those of other days. Conditions are vastly different, certainly, but human nature remains much the same. Children play, learn and get into mischief much as they always did.

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