

Hawke's Bay Luncheon

January 19, 2025

19 January 2025: Luncheon at the Taradale Bridge Club Rooms, Park Island Recreation Grounds, Napier

On a sunny but pleasantly mild day, 51 guests gathered at the Taradale Bridge Club Rooms, located in the picturesque Park Island Recreation Grounds, Napier. This was the first event held under the New Constitution of the New Zealand Founders Society Inc. and the atmosphere was warm and welcoming.

Coordinator Faye Sherriff opened the event with a heartfelt welcome and expressed gratitude to the outgoing committee, all past committee members, and the retiring President and Secretary/Treasurer, Paddy and Richard Bayley, for their exceptional contributions to the Hawkes Bay Branch. She also acknowledged Paddy's term as President of the National Executive. Although unable to attend due to a prior engagement, their efforts were recognized with a round of applause. A card was circulated for signatures, and members were informed that a container and a special rose had been purchased as a token of appreciation.

The luncheon began with soft and soothing music performed by Mike Savage, creating a relaxed backdrop for socializing. Guests enjoyed a delightful buffet-style meal, accompanied by wine and juice. The caterers were thanked for their excellent service.

The highlight of the afternoon was a presentation by Phil Smith, who delivered an engaging talk accompanied by a slideshow on the history of Park Island. Guests were captivated by the area's rich history, including its transformation before and after the 1931 earthquake. Phil's presentation highlighted the site's former use as Quarantine quarters, then an old people's home with fruit and vegetable gardens, and the dairy and pig farm once operated by the Hawkes Bay Hospital Board, which collected meal scraps from Hastings and Napier Hospitals to feed the pigs. Today, the area includes the Western Hills Cemetery and the Park Island Recreation Reserve, now used for various sports.

Phil's fascinating insights were met with applause, and Philip Mardon thanked him for his presentation. The event concluded with the new coordinator sharing ideas for future activities and encouraging members to contribute their own suggestions.

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