

# Waikato Founders 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

August 24, 2025

On a sunny Sunday afternoon, the Waikato Founders Society met in the local Guide Hall. The setting was an old Ministry of works wooden building set in a park with bush like settings. One could imagine one was back in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, bush and wooden building with grass lawn, and the area community had met to have a social occasion of celebration in this case a High Tea.



However, this was the Waikato Founders Society celebrating 50 years from inception. In true Founders tradition, the starting event of the day was presenting certificates of membership to Vic Richards and Shirley O'Rourke, brother and sister to fellow past member Grace Rodger and second generation to Jessie Richards. Mother and early Waikato Member. Our National President Ray Mudford turned up in true missionary style and Kaye Forster- Hill won best dressed period costume.

The scene was then set by Jamie Thomas of the Genealogy Society and a short twenty-minute speech on why our founders came to New Zealand and the conditions they left behind for the better world.



In Keeping with the Theme of Hamilton Book Month our main speaker was Jeff Taylor appropriately told us about the book He'd written on the Hamilton Lake ( Lake Rotoroa)

This has been a retirement project for the former pharmacist, who came to know many old-timers and local identities through his work. "The bulk of the [information] has come from the Waikato University. They have done a lot of work on the origins of the lake. Hamilton City Library has got a very good gallery of historical photos and that is the basis of the book.

At the conclusion, a full turn out of members then enjoyed the high Tea experience as our forefathers may have.

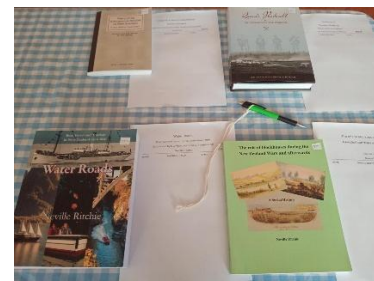
Just like our foremothers, courageous and adventurous the meeting was taken over by Carolyn Adams who introduced and invited these members ( longest standing Waikato and NZ Founders members in attendance) Peter Telfer (Waikato 1981), Paddy Bayley HB 1981), Audrey Henderson (Remote 1977) and Peter Levin (WGTN 1955) to cut the 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday cake. A lovely chocolate cake that everyone had to have a piece to ensure continuity of Waikato Founders.

# Waikato Founders 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

August 24, 2025



Carolyn then gave us a story about the apron, a hard-working utility tool used by woman during the time NZ Founders and Waikato Founders came into being. Bruce Jarrett and Don Sandford set the scene further by informing us how some well-known cliches come about. Ones like “throwing the baby out with the Bath water, the graveyard shift” and many more that would have fitted the environment of the early 1800’s.



Our own Kaye Forster-Hill gave us a 20 min story on the travels out from Mother England to New Zealand and life on the ships involved.

The meeting conclude with a confirmation of the Founders Creed and the success of an occasion is gauged on how quickly people leave but, in this case, members hung around browsing the historical displays and Waikato Founders Records of the last 50 years.

