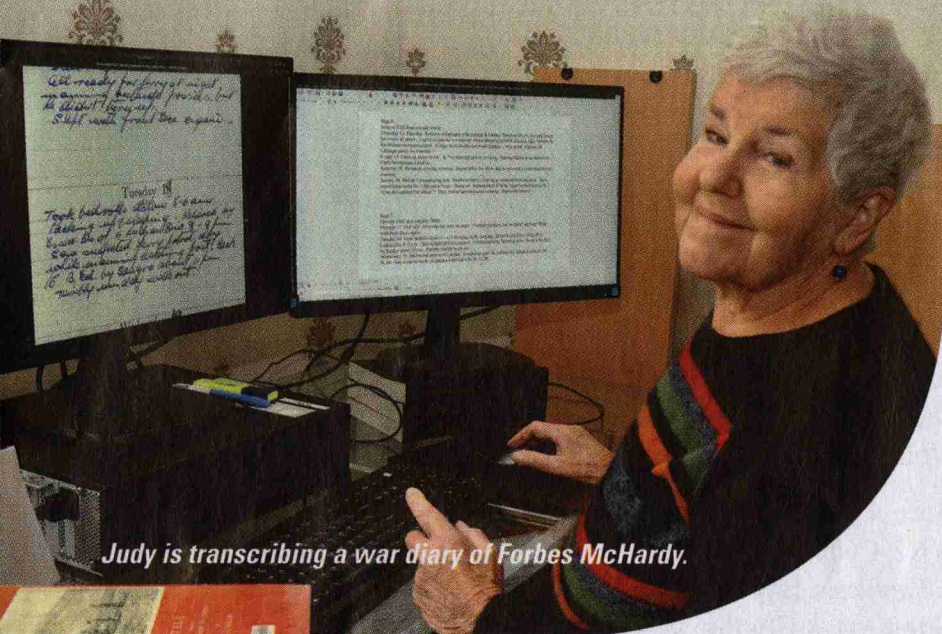


SAFEGUARDING LOCAL HISTORY



Judy is transcribing a war diary of Forbes McHardy.

There's possibly no better way to start work every morning than meeting in a cosy kitchen for a cup of tea, a bit of banter and some delicious home-made cake. This is how volunteers at the Hawke's Bay Knowledge Bank start their day before embarking on their specialist tasks that could range from scanning documents and photos to transcribing old documents which have been loaned and then digitised.

Historic Stoneycroft Homestead is a Victorian styled colonial homestead set in Stoneycroft Reserve just off Omaha Road. It is home of the Knowledge Bank which is overseen by the Hawke's Bay Digital Archive Trust. It was founded in 2011 by the late James Morgan, a former editor of Hawke's Bay Herald Tribune, who was determined that fading photos, letters, newspapers, recordings and other memorabilia stashed away in people's homes

should not be lost. James was resolute that Hawke's Bay's history be digitally preserved and be accessible to everyone. His dream was realised when the Knowledge Bank was officially opened on 1 December 2012.

Overseeing the volunteers is Office Manager Linda Bainbridge who absolutely loves her job and the variety it offers.

Robyn Warren is the longest serving volunteer who was "shoulder tapped" by James Morgan in 2010. She and other volunteers spent several months renovating the old homestead at a great cost. James managed the fundraising and "fought all sorts of bureaucracy," she says.

All material loaned to the Knowledge Bank is first assessed by Robyn before a decision is made as to what should be digitised. Initially Archivist Chris Johnson of Hastings District Council

was a great help suggesting archive policies, she says.

There are over 100 volunteers at Stoneycroft and about another 60 working in the community. Volunteers choose which days they work. Several transcribers work remotely in the Bay and a few live further afield. There are 15 off-site proof readers and two oral history transcribers. Web Person Linda Ward checks everything before it's published and expects very high standards.

John Newson is the computer technician who loves his tea and cake almost as much as his job. John built his first computer in 1984 and has been working at the Knowledge Bank since it started.

Grant Ancell is at Stoneycroft virtually every day. During lockdown he worked from home and doesn't know what he would have done without the work to keep him occupied. He retired 10

years ago and at one stage was volunteering 40 hours a week. "It's like a job and it's the best job I've had. I love it - dealing with historic buildings. I like history and computers. I don't know what people who retire do all day without something to do. This is my work." Grant is also chair of the advisory committee, a team of specialists. "The social aspect and the morning tea is important. I think we surprise people about how much we do."

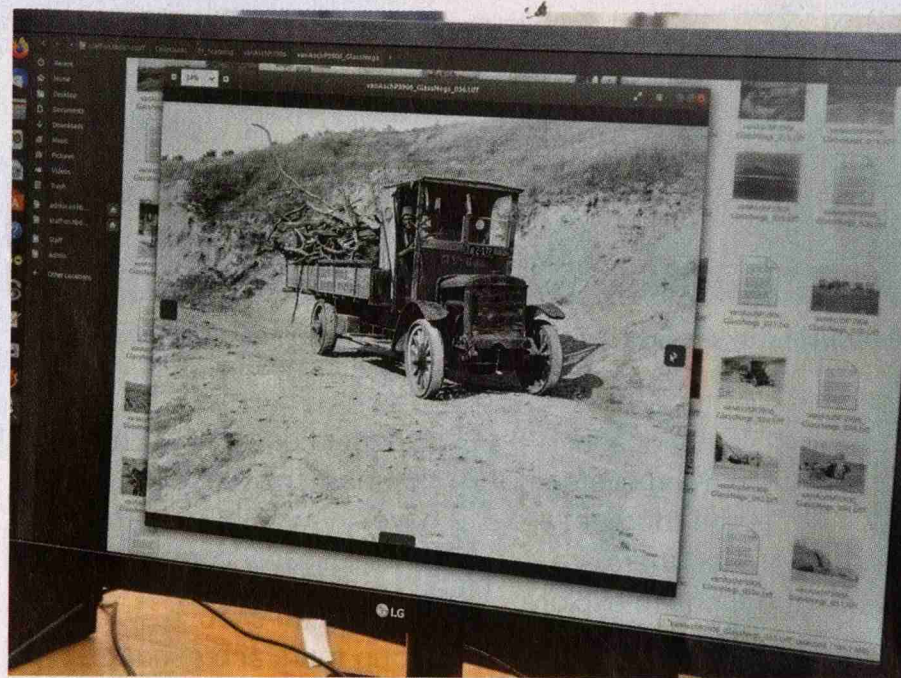
The home itself has been beautifully restored with rooms dedicated to specialist functions such as transcribing, scanning, and a computer room. Most of the rooms are named after former owners: Harrison, Beamish, Birch etc. The Ballantyne Room is arranged as a surgery and houses Dr Ballantynes original desk and books. The Ballantynes were the last private owners of Stoneycroft.

The James Morgan Room is dedicated to scanning - whether old plate glass negatives, letters or family history books. Currently there are over 26,000 images on the website. One project Grant is involved with is transcribing old letters written by members of

the Greenwood family. He finds it fascinating building up a knowledge of their everyday lives from their correspondence.

The Knowledge Bank depends on the community to deposit material to expand Hawke's Bay's diverse history

<https://knowledgebank.org.nz/> P 06 833 5333



A collection of glass plate negatives from the van Asch collection are being scanned and digitised.