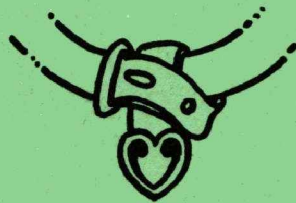


**HASTINGS
WOMENS**



**COMMUNITY
CLUB
1924 - 1987**

F O R E W O R D

It was indeed a memorable day for the women of Hastings when the first idea of forming a Club for Mutual Help, Education and Entertainment was promoted by women of vision. Mr G.A. Maddison, the then Mayor of Hastings, when opening the Club, said it was a very necessary institution as it would not only be the means of the women deriving pleasure in a social way, but it would assist them to exchange their ideas and to discuss the subjects pertaining to the social and civic welfare and development of Hastings. Sixtyfour years have passed since that day, and yet it can be truthfully said that those sentiments are as strong today as they were 64 years ago.

Recorded here is a summary of the leadership of many fine women who have been such a wonderful example to those of us who have the privilege of carrying on the fine tradition set by them.

In presenting to you the History of the Hastings Women's Community Club, our thanks go to Dr Ruth Flashoff, D. Litt (Hons), a very talented and well-known member of the Club, for her painstaking research and recording of all facets of Club life.

I am sure members will enjoy this transcription and find pleasure in remembering past events.

Thank you for the opportunity of being part of yet another phase of history of the Club - our first manuscript.

Noeleen Percy
President, 1986 - 1988

December, 1987



The handing over of the keys of the King Street property from Mrs Simmonds to Mrs Stead, President and Mrs Robinson, Secretary on February 3rd 1957.

LIST AND DATES OF CLUB PRESIDENTS AND WARDENS

Patronesses

1926 - 46	Mrs H.M. Campbell
1947 - 51	Mrs T.H. Lowry
1952 -	Mrs W.C.A. MacKenzie
1972 - 74	Mrs F. MacKenzie
1975 -	Mrs G.H. Roach

Life Members

Mrs A.T. Simpson
Mrs Waterworth
Mrs E.C. Clarkson
Mrs H.J. Lovell-Smith
Mrs T.H. Lowry, O.B.E. D. St. J.
Mrs W.G. Stead
Mrs H.G. Ballantyne
Mrs H.S. Robinson
Mrs K.E. Crompton
Mrs W.C.A. MacKenzie
Mrs C.F. MacKenzie
Mrs G.H. Roach
Mrs Hedley Harvey
Mrs H.B. Poppelwell

Presidents

1924 - 26	Mrs T.W. Lewis
1927	Mrs W.G. Stead
1928 - 33	Mrs T.H. Lowry
1934	Mrs E. Clarkson
1935 - 40	Mrs T.H. Lowry
1941 - 43	Mrs W.G. Stead
1944 - 46	Mrs T.H. Lowry
1947 - 59	Mrs W.G. Stead
1959 - 62	Mrs F. MacKenzie
1963 - 74	Mrs Hedley Harvey
1975 - 82	Mrs H.B. Poppelwell
1983 - 85	Mrs N. Morton
1986 -	Mrs N. Percy



WAR ORGANISATION
OF THE
BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY
AND
ORDER OF ST JOHN OF JERUSALEM

Presented to

*Community Club Sewing Circle
New Zealand Red Cross Society*

in recognition of devoted service to
the cause of humanity
during the second world war

1939-1945

George R.I.

Sovereign Head,
Order of St. John of Jerusalem

Elizabeth R.

President,
British Red Cross Society

Hon. Secretary
Hon. Treasurer
Committee

Gilbert McKay, Morrie Wood and
W. MacKenzie
Mrs H.J. Lovell-Smith
Mrs Waterworth
Mesdames Douglas Williams, C. Heald,
Perrin, Hallet, Harris, W.G. Stead,
Penlington, Gilbertson, Brodie, Stratton
Misses Bullon and Gray

These are names to remember and many of their families are prominent in Hawkes Bay today.

The yearly subscription was voted at £1.1.0, junior members 10/6d.

Note: The above were the Founders of the Club when it was first promoted on February 20th, 1924; from that date they had operated with Mrs T.W. Lewis as interim President and Mrs Lovell-Smith as Secretary. They had taken rooms in the Heretaunga Building and the Club had been officially opened by the then Mayor, Mr G.A. Maddison, when he said, "It is a very necessary institution as it would not only be the means of the women deriving pleasure in a social way but it would assist them to exchange their differing views and ideas and to discuss the subjects pertaining to the social and civic welfare and development of Hastings," and wished it every success. Despite not yet being an incorporated Club, this year was important -

1. They applied and received their Certificate for Incorporated Societies;
2. Their rooms were acquired and furnished and membership increased;
3. A Dramatic Circle was formed and ran what was known as "First Shilling Pop" and held in the Municipal Theatre, to raise funds.
4. Arrangements were made for the entertaining of celebrities visiting the Bay.
5. An Auditor, Mr J. Fraser, was asked to audit the books and he accepted and helped the Club for many years.

At the First Annual General Meeting, when the founding members were officially voted into office as recorded in the minutes - Mrs Muriel Lewis was especially thanked for her initiative and hard work in promoting the Club.

In 1928 Mrs T.H. Lowry was voted in as President after Mrs W.G. Stead relinquished office to go overseas. Mrs Lowry remained in office for five years until 1933. It is interesting to note in reading through

RED CROSS & ST. JOHN



CENTRAL HOSPITAL

SUPPLY SERVICE

THE WAR ORGANISATION OF
THE BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY & ORDER OF ST. JOHN

Presented to _____

HASTINGS COMMUNITY CLUB
RED CROSS SEWING GUILD

*in recognition of valuable services rendered in the making
of hospital supplies, during the world war from 1939*

Alice

President

the minutes the influence of each President, Mrs Lowry, Mrs Stead and Mrs Clarkson as they took over office one from the other in this period.

Mrs Stead seems to have laid the foundations of music, the arts and various groups as did Mrs Lewis. Mrs Lowry supported these groups but her interests had wider horizons, especially that of the Red Cross and the need for the Club to entertain visiting celebrities. We find her writing and inviting H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester to meet the members. However, the Mayor, Mr G.A. Maddison, realising that H.R.H. would have little time in Hastings, asked Club members to attend the public function and decorate the dais for the reception. It was so beautifully done that it created a precedent for Vice Regal visits and other celebrations for years to come. Records show that the Hastings Women's Community Club became a real force in the life of Hastings and all charitable organisations received their help and support - to name a few:-

- The New Zealand Red Cross Society
- N.Z. Institute for the Blind
- The Cancer Research Fund
- N.Z. Free Kindergarten
- The Mayor's of Hastings Relief Fund

and many others.

Invitations were also issued to visiting celebrities to the city, including -

- The Vienna Boys' Choir
- Jean Batten
- Galli Curci.

They were many and varied, and the Club's aims "for Mutual Help, Education and Entertainment" were expressed in every way.

At this time we must remember that it was the time of the great Depression and also of the earthquake and the Club members faced up to these realities with courage and example.

The following quote shows how much the Club was thought of in those days of 1929 by the people of Hastings:-

"The Official Guide to Hastings District issued in 1929 by the then Mayor, G.A. Maddison, for Tourist, Sportsman and Settler - on page 51 has the following entry and is an excellent summing up of this early period of the Hastings Women's Community Club.

I quote:-

"Aim - For Mutual Help, Education and Entertainment clearly explains the purpose of its existence. Its objects are educative, altruistic and social, its particular aims are to interest young people in the study of music and literature; to give them the opportunity of meeting famous visitors to the town and to be in readiness to give practical assistance to charitable organisations and in the arrangement of civic affairs and ceremonies.

"The Club provides outstanding proof that constructive criticism is one of the best foundations upon which to build success. It sprang into being almost overnight a little over four years ago and its origin is found in an appeal contained in a private letter - 'Madam Lydia Lipvoska, the great Russian Soprano, is to visit Hastings - can you do anything to arouse public interest?'

"The Club was formed a little later but it was found impossible to proceed without a definite meeting place. Rooms had to be taken and rules and regulations drawn up. The Club was registered as an incorporated society in April, 1925.

"As its members, and consequently its activities, increased, the need for further accommodation became most urgent. To cope with the position it was found necessary to raise the subscription and to impose an entrance fee, but to all intents and purposes the Club's aims and objects are the same now as they were at its inauguration four years ago.

"It has entertained many famous people, among them Their Excellencies the last two Governors-General and their wives, Lord and Lady Jellicoe and Sir Charles and Lady Fergusson; and recalls with pride the public mention of its usefulness to His Worship the Mayor on more than one occasion.

"Numerous lectures, music recitals and demonstrations by experts on all manner of subjects have been arranged by the Club's literary, musical and dramatic circles, and a flourishing play-reading and Bridge circle are much in evidence.

"Realizing the benefit that such an institution is to visitors and travellers from overseas, as well as those that come as strangers to the town, the Club now belongs to the N.Z. Federation of Women's Clubs and so is part and parcel of the great fellowship of Club Women the world over."

The Second Decade, 1935 - 45

This includes the period of the Second World War. It was a time of endeavour and purpose, when a sewing guild was formed. Mrs Stead, and then Mrs Lowry were Presidents and both gave themselves without stint to the War effort. So many of the members had menfolk in the Forces and overseas which brought their own extra responsibilities which such a crisis demands in Church and local organisations. Mrs Lowry herself was very busy as Hawkes Bay representative on the Joint Council of the Red Cross Society and Order of St. John and also the founding of the Lowry Hut in the Middle East, but she encouraged and spurred everyone on in the Club.

That the members responded is a special recognition received from Elizabeth the Queen Mother, then Queen of England. Here it is:- This document is now framed and hanging in the Club.

"In recognition of devoted service to the cause of humanity during the Second World War.

"Signed - George R.I.
Elizabeth R."

The Sewing Guild also received special recognition from Lady Alice Fergusson; it reads:-

"Hastings Community Club, Red Cross Sewing Guild, in recognition of valuable services rendered in the making of hospital supplies during the World War from 1939, for the Central Hospital Supply Service."

These are prized momentos and hang in the Club today.

Minutes covering this period of time are devoted entirely to the supply of materials and general despatch. It is here that Miss Helen Ford played a very active part and often acted as Secretary.

It would seem that the Hastings Women's Community Club took a very active part in the War effort, and we can all be proud of it.

1946 - 56

In this decade the Club gained a new momentum. Mrs Robinson took over as Secretary and from now on there is a marked difference in the presentation of minutes and the business side of the Club life.

Everyone was looking ahead to expansion with their own Club Rooms, larger membership with the consequent increased facilities.

The Constitution was studied and brought up-to-date; all the groups re-formed. Mrs Lowry and Mrs Stead were in and out of the Presidency; younger women were joining and the accommodation at Mrs Drake's house called for a committee to be formed to look for a larger and more permanent home. Mrs Roach and Mrs Ballantyne took on this task. The Club flourished and all was well.



50th Anniversary

Back Row: Mrs Hedley Harvey, President, Mrs Robinson, Secretary,
Mrs Roach, Foundation Member

Front Row: Mrs King, Mrs Wedd, Mrs Price, Mrs Commin, Foundation Members

1957 -67

1957 was the most auspicious year for the Hastings Women's Community Club as Mrs Roach and Mrs Ballantyne had been very busy; they looked at properties in Knight Street and also asked Mrs Drake if she would sell her property. Briefly, the following is what took place:-

8th June, 1957 was the last year of the lease of Mrs Drake's house. It was proposed that a place of the Club's own be purchased.

August, 1957. A property in Knight Street was looked at to see if it could be altered.

1st November, 1957. Two other properties, one in King Street North, the other the corner of King Street and Eastbourne were viewed, and a discussion took place about raising debentures as a method of finding the money.

6th December, 1957. Mr Natusch gave his opinion that the King Street North house was a good one. For 500 it could be made ready for use and further alterations could be done later. The alterations to make the lounge 765 square feet and Bridge room 20' x 17'.

9th December, 1957. At a Special General Meeting with the President, Mrs R. Stead in the chair, it was passed that an option on the King Street North property be taken up. The purchase price was 5,000 , deposit to be 500 for the option, 1,500 on possession 3rd February, 1958; 3,000 on mortgage for five years at 5½%. Finances of the Club at that time were - 883 in the Post Office, 300 in the National Bank.

3rd February, 1958. Payment of 1,592.10.5 was made, the total payment to date being 2,092.10.5. The property was now the Club's responsibility, the above amount being made up as follows:-

Deposit	500. 0. 0
On possession	1,500. 0. 0
Stamp duty, etc	92.10. 5
	<hr/>
	2,092.10. 5

30th April, 1958. The first Annual General Meeting was held in the new Club Rooms.

29th June, 1960. The official opening of the new Club Rooms was held 1966. 1,500 of the mortgage was paid off. As the Club moved into the 1970's, its next decade, it became established and the owners of a very valuable property.

In 1971 the card room was extended and in 1973 a further \$1,000 of the mortgage was paid.

3rd February, 1978. A special meeting of the Committee was held and it was resolved that the mortgage be paid off by paying \$2,000 and raising a term loan from the National Bank for \$3,000, to be paid back over five years.

30th June, 1982. The final payment to the Bank was made to clear the term loan. The Club was now freehold and debt-free.

The Late 1970's and 1980 - 87

These years have seen the Club go from strength to strength; the various groups seem to flourish under good leadership and the Presidency under Mrs Hedley Harvey whose graciousness and charm continued the dignity to which the Club always aspired. During her twelve years as President the Club prospered, and much use was made of the Club's grand piano. Mrs Harvey's beautiful floral arrangements and the attractively iced cakes for special occasions gave great pleasure to members.

Mrs Janet Poppelwell followed in 1975, and proved a charming hostess, always ready to share the delight of her voice with us. She gave the Club much by her sincerity and friendship to all - a caring President.

Presidents were now holding office for a shorter time, and Nancy Morton became President in 1983. She brought with her a more modern approach to all she did and a new confidence in an everchanging world. How lucky has our Club been in all its Presidents who through the years have always set a high example and kept the standards high.

One thing they have always done and are still doing is to maintain the link of communication and friendship between members of every age and attitude. As for the Club members themselves, they are mostly the "Golden Oldies" who meet weekly and often in their homes to share the time of peace and tranquility they enjoy. Through the years there have been members who have celebrated a hundred years or more, and others at ninety and eighty who look down on the sixties and seventies and call them "just girls."

The Club continues to flourish under the present leadership of Mrs Noeleen Percy. Noeleen has continued to follow the high standard of dignity and consideration which the Club has always maintained. As each President gives something of herself to the Club, so has Noeleen

with innovations such as the formation of a walking group, an outing much enjoyed by those able to participate. Her caring concern for all members is greatly appreciated.



Mrs N. Percy, President, Mrs E. King, Foundation Member,
Mrs A. Shirras, Secretary June 1987