

*****Memories of a genuine PORT-ITE*****

Intro. Who am I and why would I want to anyhow?. There's a Port saying that you can take people out of the Port but you can't take the Port out of the people. Once a Port-ite always a Port-ite and proud of it.

For some time now I have been pondering if I should put my thoughts and memories down on paper of my life and upbringing in the Port. The area of Port Ahuriri was affectionally known as the Port to the locals and as a slum to others. Now it's Napier's place to live. Jaffas and their ilk have invaded it. Hardinge Rd for instance now has probably the highest rating-tax in Napier.

I am James Sydney Otton – born and raised in the Port over seventy years ago and fourth generation Kiwi – eldest son of Harry and Ina Otton, grandson of Syd and Kate who had a grocery business in Waghorne St for many years. This particular business failed for two reasons around the mid-sixties. One when supermarkets became popular and smaller shops could not compete and two, when after jobs began to disappear so did money, and credit accounts went often unpaid – not maliciously, but folks just could not keep up. I have personal knowledge of this when I was employed on the wharves. Us new dockers were known as green-bottles which meant shut-up and usually treated as such. On one occasion I was in a wharf gang loading meat with the subject of the day on Napier's trams. My grandfather Syd drove the first tram along Hastings St and I informed them so. "Whats your name son" and I duly identified myself. "Not Syd Ottoms grandson – jeez why did'nt you say so". He was responsible for many meals in the strike days and readily allowed credit to his customers unfortunately affected, but that did'nt put money in the bank or pay the bills. But those actions were never forgotten by the older men in the union and I was made. This was the true spirit of life in the Port.

. It was home to railway employees, wharfies, harbour board workers, three large trucking firms, woolstores, a large fishing community, a large steel works, a tobacco company and boat-building and many other smaller businesses. Oh and three churches. It had three pubs, wine and spirit merchants, two schools (State and Catholic), petroleum depots, a soft drink factory, and timber yards to name a few. All of which went into the community known as the Port. I don't know how far or where this attempt of mine to put my thoughts down will take me and I hope people will not be offended if mistakes come in (and they probably will,) but here goes.

Chapter 1. My area of stomping ground in the Port generally went from the playing area behind the Port school we knew as the Reserve - previously the South Pond, and up to the Napier Port wharves. The North Pond was between Waghorne St & Battery Rd both pre-earthquake.

I attended the Port school from 1945 for six years then onto Napier Intermediate and Napier Boys High before taking a carpentry apprenticeship with the Faulknor Construction Co which did a lot of building in Hawkes Bay and also in the Port area including Williams & Kettle, HB Farmers stores and a large steel store along West Quay. W&K No1 store incidentally was the venue for large exhibitions in the 1950's which went on for a week or so. NZ Loan & Mercantile also hosted an exhibition (I think). I eventually finished my working career after twenty-something years on the wharf and now in my retirement years regularly go walkabout around the Port and look at the new and refurbished houses and buildings erected for retirement, cafes and boutique bars, the

large increase of pleasure boats and yachts anchored in the inner harbour. The only large industry still in existence is the fishing industry and the Napier wharves, but that has diminished with the increase in container cargo. When I was on the wharf there were 550+ wharfies employed - now there would'nt be fifty permanent men. Working for the WIC (Waterfront Industry Commission) I consider the best time of my working life. It was great place to work with a good workforce. I reckon 95% of the workforce were real good blokes who did a good job. Sure there were some who did'nt pull their weight, but they soon were sorted - what workforce has'nt got some bludgers. It was a permanent job for those who played by the rules and the Union was the first to act and straighten up those who needed it. I know that wharfies sometimes had a bad name among the community, but the worst criticism usually came from those who made application to get on the wharf and missed out. There were many tradesmen, professional men, ex- railways, woolclassers, drivers, even farmers, in fact all classes of society working down there. There were men out from the armed-services, the Merchant Navy, the odd Copper or two, there was one who had been a commando in the British army, And there were all nationalities and races - and none of the racial crap that surrounds us now. The annual Interport Sports was when all the ports took part was among the biggest sports events in the country. It consisted of bowls (indoor and outdoor), snooker, golf, running, cricket and there were some pretty good players amongst them. There was even a current All Black Neil Thimbleby worked there and I would think that every rugby and soccer club in Napier/Hastings had wharfies in their teams.

Why? Because it was permanent well paid job. I remember one Napier builder who publicly complained he could'nt get any chippies to do his work as many were on the wharf. He did'nt mention though that they would be sacked as soon as work ran out if not before. The Union also had a say in who got on the wharf and they knew who was who - their reputations preceeded them so no job. It's a far different place now - the wharf works 7days x 24 hours - the guys know that's what they sign up for. And the social nights run by the wharfies social-committee were real great dance-nights. The hall was always full - the band usually Black Pearl which alone was reason enough to attend. And the waterfront was replete with some of Napier's great characters - I would need a separate chapter to record them all so I've listed some I remember in the last chapter.

The three trucking firms that I remember Williams & Creagh, Barry Brothers and FG Smith which between them employed dozens have all long gone, but they all contributed to many functions which made the Port what it was.

Life for me was walking every day to school along the railway tracks behind Waghorne St, through the dump and onto school. Not many people would know that a large dump was located between the railway and the Port Ahuriri Bowling Club and which now is home to a petroleum depot. The bowling club incidentally is among the oldest in Hawkes Bay and approaching it's century. A look at their honours boards tell their own story. A short-cut went through the dump and was used to get to Battery Rd. The Port School is of course still in Lever St - the catholic school at that time was St Mary's in Coronation St, but that has long gone. The annual Port School ball was the social of the year - it was held in Williams & Kettle No3 store in Outram St over two nights, the first night for the school pupils in fancy dress and the second night for adults. W&K by the way, to my knowledge never charged for the premises. It boasted the largest Gay

Gordons in the world , up to seven supper sittings, two bands, no booze of course, but the toilets next morning were always chocker with empty hip-flasks. For all that no problems were ever recorded of bad behaviour - they were just great nights enjoyed by hundreds. The parents and friends of the school were of course responsible for the preparations, usually around six weeks, and running of the nights and catering, but donations of food all came from local businesses. Some names that I remember, but with apologies to others that I miss include Munroe, Forest, Steel, Otton, Pottinger, Hartley, Prosser, Currie, Kersey, Plows, Floyd, Plunket, Howell, Krey, Brimmer, MacDougall, McKee, the list goes on. Port people all – good people.

One person that I must give special mention to is the late Gordon Steele whom I had many talks with over the years – he was a mine of information on Port affairs.

Russell Spillar too, as official photographer must have gone through dozens of film spools. No one ever missed the Port School balls. Another event I remember was on the occasion of Napier becoming a city and of course the Port school being one of Napier's oldest schools was proudly in the grand parade with an appropriately decorated float and all us kids aboard. Mr.Reid was the headmaster of the day and of all the teachers I had in my schooling days he and Bruce Forrest would have been among the best. The best memory I have of playing sport was the time the Port school beat Marewa for the InterSchool Challenge shield, but it nearly didn't happen. We were leading by the barest margin with just minutes to go when a Marewa player made what looked like a winning break. Our captain Fred Gerbes yelled out to our fullback George Culshaw "get him George" and he did with a great tackle. I'm always pleased I never played fullback – always on the wing when the only time I had to touch the ball was at a line-out. But jeez what a thrill – the only sports trophy I ever won in my school days. The annual pets-day at school was always looked forward to, but only if you actually had a pet which we didn't. My mate Noel Pottinger (Potty) whose father was a fisherman on the trawler Dolphin and of course in those days no radios were carried by the boats so their pigeons were used to carry messages back to land. So Potty and I borrowed a couple of pigeons to school as our pets. When the judging was all done we let the birds go and which flew straight off being homers. Of course we reported our loss to the teachers and were allowed to go find them – so ended that days schooling. Potty's father by the way later crewed on the new Majestic skippered by Johnny Tait brother of a later mayor/MP of Napier Sir Peter Tait.

Another occasion for the past-pupils of the school was celebrated at the Centennial Hall in 1970 something. This was a great night with many including myself renewing old acquaintances with pupils and teachers alike. Also the Port locals celebrated at that hall on another great occasion – I forget what it was and I don't know how many attended, but there was heaps. An event that directly concerned me occurred when late one night I was sitting in my car along with my then fiancé Shirley just wasting time as you do when a strong smell of petrol became apparent. This happened just behind my parents house in Waghorne St and adjacent to a rail-siding that was used to fill rail-petrol wagons.

On investigating further the entire area was flooded with what looked like and certainly smelled like petrol. I immediately rang the emergencies services who attended and discovered that the flood was caused by water used by the oil-companies to flush the wagons as routine maintenance. Well I had lived there for 20 odd years and never known about this. The fire-chief and police officers declared it a justifiable false-alarm. Jeez.

Chapter 2. I mentioned earlier that my grandfather was a tram –conductor before he became a grocer in Waghorne St. I remember he mentioned the tramway went from the terminus in Napier up Dickens St into Hastings St over Shakespeare Rd and down to the terminus in Bridge St. Two books that I have referenced have differing statements on the precise route the tramway took from the Shakespeare Rd/Battery Rd intersection.

One book states the tramway went down Battery Rd then along Lever St to the terminus at the junction of Bridge St, Riddell St and Hyderabad Rd, while the other book has photographs of the tram-lines in Waghorne St and makes no reference to Battery Rd as the tramway. Waghorne St by the way started at the bottom of Shakespeare Rd and ended at Nelson Quay after crossing Bridge St and I have asked numerous people who may have knowledge on the route, including the city historian, but all to no avail. It's a question I should have asked Gordon Steele or my grandfather, but too late. Much too late. Another reason why I am putting this on paper before I depart so I hope it's of use to someone down the line. Any explanation of the route would be welcome, but it's a long time ago so I'm not too hopeful, but I'd like to know.

Some of the shops and other businesses in the Port that I remember include the then National Tobacco Co owned by the Husheer family, Jas J Niven steel works both big employers, Plowmans SoftDrinks – later Long&Bardens, Railway, Crown and Union hotels and their various proprietors, the latter two hotels still very much in operation as is Pipers Canvas Co. Denholms two shops, Geoff Seymour greengrocers, Chaplow & Howell outfitters (Snow Chaplow also had a danceband while Mrs Howell ran the business), Lyndsay Keating mens hairdresser, Cliff Chittendon hairdresser, Eric Greaney Cycles, four fish processing plants Napier Fisheries, Cellina Trawling, Direct Fish, and Deep Sea. Ted Natrass Port Garage, Christies Joinery factory, Prebble Bros furniture, W&K, dePelichetMcLeod, HBF, Loan&Merc, various Shipping Co's included Blue Star, NZSS, Port Line, (Richardsons was Napier owned -their vessels including Koao, Koataunui, Pukeko, Pukara trading mainly East Coast ports & beaches). Barry Bros coal-yard in Waghorne St under the foremanship of Mr.O'Shaughnessy. McCarthy books, Maurie Green Fish'n' Chips (still the best I had), Alan Shepherd Pie Cart, Mrs Heiford chemist, Jack Martin & Johnny Tait butchers, John O'Dowd and Keith Irwin both had dairies, Ray Hart the Kandy Kitchen milk-bar and first juke-box in the Port, the Kiwi Bakery, Boyds Delicatessan, the crematorium (who remembers that or were it was), Bull Brothers timber yard, the Spit Fire Brigade, the Port library (a damn good one too), the 'Buff Hall' were many dances and Inglesides (Caledonian nights) were held. It was these Inglesides that we lads would end up at after the Tuesday Night movies in town usually just in time for supper. One of the major reconstructions is the new accommodation and office units under the Crown Hotel name. That block was once home to about 6 houses, two fish-processors, a bakery and a milk-bar (Kandy Kitchen), Ian Price Providor. (Ian's father was caretaker at Port school way back for many years). Now it's looking like the Gold Coast (smaller version of course). A visit to the Boathouse museum in Coronation St would be well worth looking at if your interested in maritime matters as most Port people are – also the Whales Tale now housed in the old Kandy Kitchen for maritime items. The Buff was also used weekly by the Napier Amateur Wrestling Association under the guidance of "Bomba" Wells, Jim Locke and Scotty McCall. Some of the wrestling names I remember are Basil Diack (of

Victoria Hotel fame), Merv Batt (later known as Steve Rickard), Len Hartley, Tony Natrass, (both Port boys), Jim Otton, (yep me) and Keith Hancox (also known as a Cook Strait swimmer). Most of those guys named were really good wrestlers while one also being remembered for other reasons.

Later in life our Saturday night dances included such great bands a Black Pearl (an all waterfront band), Ernie Rouse Trad Band, Gentry, Shadracks with Abe Phillips, Starlight Serenaders and others whose names I can't bring to mind, except one. When rock n'roll hit the world in the mid-fifties and we'd all seen the movie Rock Around The Clock half-a-dozen times five of us guys, me, Potty, Len, Ray Harris and Jim Thompson decided to try and imitate a top British skiffle group Lonnie Donegan. So apart from my guitar we made all the other instruments needed and went out to make a bundle. We played a concert in the Municipal Theatre and other gigs in pubs and dances. We each played a soap-box for beat, a broom-stick fitted with bottle-tops for effects, maracas and guitars and were'nt all that bad either, but it was a case of "don't call us, we'll call you". We all sang vocals and "Fabulous Five" we were named. Don Nicholson was the promoter and he went on to become a successful show promoter in Australia, but alas not with us in tow. Look what the music world missed. While on music some of the Port mothers put together a senior choir that sung the older songs. I don't recall all the ladies, but ~~two~~ were my and Potty's mothers and that choir was very good. Again the spirit of the Port.

I would like to make greater reference about the fishing-boats and their respective crews, but my limited knowledge of them would not do them justice. Another mate of mine Len Hartley, who's family were into fishing on the John A Settree, would be the one for that info. But some of the boats I remember were the TradeWind, Arial, Jenco, Silver Foam, Dolphin, Majestic, John A Settree, Dawn, Deep Sea, West Wind, Taiaroa, Marina, Rex, Kotuku, Sea Hawk, Cellina, Marlborough, Dauntless, Pania, Pirimai, Mercury Belle, Neptune, Miss Kaikohe, Pulsar, Glady. Two well known fishermen among many would be Johnny and Jimmy Picone. Jimmy had somehow lost one leg before my time, but continued fishing with the aid of a crutch. But like I say I don't remember them all.

The owner of the Deep Sea Co Jens Jenssen even had a boat-building facility on the Port Beach.

The disused Napier Harbour Board dredge JDO was laid up alongside West Quay for years and became a great diving platform for us kids.

The three churches earlier referred to were St,Andrews in Ossian St where incidentally I was married in 1962 and Knox Presbyterian in Waghorne St who had the best picnics, transport provided by Napier Fisheries trucks, and the catholic church in Coronation St. The sole church remaining is the Knox church which has been there over 105+ years, but StAndrews is now located in Westshore, and the catholic church which has relocated into Napier City. The Port area was mostly constructed along a land finger known as the Spit because it had tidal sea-water on both sides ie between Hardinge Rd and Battery Rd. Waghorne St actually ran in-between on the Spit which gained it's sea-water by flowing under the bridge on Bridge St via the Iron Pot. I remember taking a fair load of crap

about the name Spit, but usually returned it with interest. The 1931 earthquake lifted the land about 6feet and that was the end of the Spit and Inner Harbour for larger shipping.

Chapter 3. Some of the Port people I remember (and I will omit a lot) include police officers who people really respected (there was one who I loathed and must remain anonymous so I'll just call him Jon P while another who I'll call MacT made it his personal business to sneak up on courting couples and others at night then suddenly spring up and say "whats going here" but the other resident cops are in my opinion worthy of mention because of their sensible attitudes (ie a kick up the jacksy with a warning or something similar) rather than being over the top. Bob Green, ? Staniford, Roy Ivory, Bill Tumilty and ? Currie all come into this category. Jon P for instance took me and Potty to court for being in a local snooker-room while underage (18). Potty went to the Magistrates Court and was fined while I went to Juvenile Court, but unfortunately for Jon P he made a error in the charge sheet that I was earning 30quid a week as an apprentice which actually was 3quid a week. The beak immediately threw the case out which riled Jon P so much he threatened me with a belting if I upset him again. He got his chance on bonfire night when I let a banger off within his vision and he charged me again. A member of the public Bronk Ireland (the Port version of Jim Gleeson) was nearby and when he heard of this took of to complain to the duty sergeant which also ended with a dismissal of charge. The old police-station was located, if you want to know, was on the corner of Ossian and Colin Streets.

But getting back to Port people I remember in Waghorne St and in no strict or spelling order they were Boardman, Pottinger, Kersey, Cattanach, Goss, Smith, Gillies, McKenzie, Howell, McEachen, Copping, McKee, Hatch, Crozier, Otton, O'Shaughnessy, Keating, Wilson, Ireland, Quinn, Hirini, Heading, Mason, Bonica, deStefano, Stead, Howe, Lobb, Duncan, Angove, Campbell, Burrows, Greaney Sullivan, Gilbertson, Hatch, Nicholson, Wharton, Glock, Hunt, Donghi. Hardinge Rd includes Hartley, Matson, Simmonds, Duncan, Natrass, Black, Smart, McAlister, Sellar, Goodlad, Cullen, Heath, Nelson, Barham, Reid, Lucas, Quigley, Steele, Graham, Ridley, Higgins, Morrisey, Gunn, Fred Shaw was also a pretty good magician, Natrass, Apperley, Hinks, Grant, Tolley, Halvorsen, Mushimessi, Picone. Battery Rd includes Thompson, Plunket, Forest, Downing, Prosser, Merson, Cowley Pirie, Moody, Watson, Oliver, Floyd, Stowes. Kenny Rd included Necy, Ivory, Smith. Falvey, Harris in Breakwater Rd.

I'm not up to speed on the names of people around the Lever, Campbell, Ossian St area, even though Ossian St was my first address after marriage, but I remember the Kreys, Pagets, Duncan and Cavallaros in Coronation St. Dunnets, Chapmans in Campbell St. The Ted Natrass I refer to had the Port Garage in Waghorne St and also was into speed-boats – he had the fastest boat around in the Miss Napier while his second son Tony was an excellent amateur wrestler and very good rugby forward. For anyone wanting knowledge of blue-water sailing there were four Cape Horners that I know of who worked or lived at the Port. Skipper McNab, George Gunn (Harbour Master), Martin West, Fred Chapman (both Harbour Board) were all mariners who had sailed around Cape Horn on square-riggers.

As I mentioned earlier I regularly walk around the Port area and as I pass along I try to remember who lived where and what was where. I usually get it right, but can get

stumped with all the new premises erected. One old building that was known as the London Boarding house in Waghorne St has long gone and I can only give an approximation as to where it exactly was - just along from the Buff Hall. It was an old wooden two story place that in my time was then closed for accommodation, but perhaps because it was more commonly known the ghost-house is a reason why. Also while out walking I am astounded at the appearance of the many wooden piles of an old breakwater that have come into view along the foreshore. Now I have hundreds of times swum all along that foreshore and I'll swear they were never there as apparent as they are now. My theory is that natural water erosion caused by the Port of Napier reclamation is directly responsible. I estimate that the loss of the foreshore would be about two meters in height and ten meters in width for a good 500 meters - the amount lost in cubic meters about 10000, as I remember it anyhow. Larry Dallimore is one very concerned person who won't let the erosion problem at the Port and Westshore beaches die. He constantly expresses his concerns in the HB Today, but gets little or no response from the Port of Napier authorities to his excellent letters. Their attitude seems to be to forget it and it will go away - just bring on the logs and containers, that's where the money is. Remember what happened when they decided to reclaim sandy beach opposite Hornsey Road for container storage - the people's protest stopped that. So now they have decided to store the containers on the old dump along Battery Road. But it's the erosion caused by breakwater expansion and reclamation that's to blame. My theory anyhow.

I was working for the then Napier Harbour Board (later Hawkes Bay Harbour Board then Port Company) in the early 70's on the construction staff when the biggest sea-storm that I remember hit Hawkes Bay. It was so big the mole was almost breached - the newly reclaimed area where the phosphate sheds are now was swamped by huge waves and 28 ton concrete blocks that formed the breakwater just simply disappeared. I still recall the then Port engineer standing on the mole almost defying the waves to stop, a bit like King Canute, but to no avail. He got drenched but that day the harbour was almost lost. The water movement in the harbour was so bad the port was cleared of shipping. One vessel Hop Chong was loading timber and had to leave with the deck cargo not lashed - it made it to the channel before it lost it's cargo overboard. Some of it was recovered on the northern beaches - some never found.

There were two oil-pipelines running from the Napier wharfs to the installations at the Pier Heads which were eventually removed when those installations were moved. There were three swimming-pools, as well as the Port main beach itself along Hardinge Rd. The first was known as Shannahans pool and opposite the old engine-shed in Chatham St. the second was known as Cattanachs pool opposite Outram St and the third was opposite about Raglan St. All of these pools except the Port beach itself were very much high-tide pools, meaning they were unswimmable on the low tides. And they were, as the foreshore is still, surrounded by rocks which regularly had to be removed. It again was the Port spirit that did the removing - people while swimming could be seen removing the rocks to the pool sides. My own parents along with other concerned Port-ites banded together and formed an organization called the Port Progressive Committee and whose aim was to clean up the Port itself and the beaches to enhance the area. One idea was to write to the then Napier Harbour Board seeking their assistance to permanently remove the rocks, after all it was under their ownership, but that request was formally given the bums rush and promptly shelved. The Committee did some good work over the years,

but as age and interest played their games it went into cold storage. The rocks are still there, but a better green belt and recently installed walking/cycling track have enhanced the foreshore no end.

There were also a couple of old wooden changing-sheds along the beach, but they had apparently been constructed with a lower grade of timber because they had holes that mysteriously appeared between the mens and ladies changing rooms. Funny that.

The Port foreshore as I said started at E-shed, opposite what is now Whakatu Coolstores (formerly Cranby Building Supplies) and Hugh MacAlister Contractors, then down by the old engine-shed which housed the old loco used to shunt wagons from the marshalling yard to the wharf (I think a Mr. Gunn who lived on Hardinge Rd was the regular engineer), and on to the Pier Heads. There would'nt be too many who remember that name Pier Heads, but that's what it was known as. After the carpet-baggers arrived they had the name changed to Perfume Point because the sewage was discharged there on the ebbing tide and they felt that name was more appropriate. Some call it progress – I call it changing history to suit themselves.

The beach shoreline also had about three old concrete pill-boxes designed to stop the Japanese in world-war two – never used of course, but made good play areas and toilets until demolished later.

Also the beachfront on bonfire nights was celebrated with many fires built by the local kids, myself included, who had scavenged around in search for burnable material for weeks. I reckon about five or six fires were built every year– some even suffered an accidental early burn or so it was claimed. Arson today, but just rivalry back then. To continue, many may not know that between the Pier Heads and the Iron Pot three oil-companys (Shell, Caltex and Atlantic) had their depots with many large storage tanks there. These, along with the then Europa Oil, whose tanks were half-way up Milton Rd, all moved to where they now – yep on the old dump ground I mentioned earlier. A little further along was and still is the Iron Pot – an old whaling station and which was one of the first berths in Napier. Many years ago it silted up and became useless for all vessels, but a local contractor named Clarrie Hill decided he could dredge the Pot and once again make it navigable for smaller vessels. After much ranting with local bodies he got the ok and rigged a bucket type dredge that was fixed from the Port side to a solid point on the Westshore side. This apparatus was pulled along the sea-bed on a steel-wire that allowed the wire and bucket to fully submerge when vessels required seaway and eventually much of the sand was removed. Anyone interested in further history of the Port area and maritime workings should visit the Customhouse exhibition on Customs Quay – it's well worth it.

Just past the Iron Pot is West Quay which was a flourishing wharf area up until the 1931 earthquake. Now home to the fishing fleet and the many boutique cafes and bars and apartments which have been recently re-constructed in old disused wool-stores. Like I say the Port was once the slum area of Napier - now it's the place to live. A little further on and just opposite the entrance to the sailing-club is the round-house pub that had the bar-licence transferred from the old Railway Hotel when it closed. Now under the patronage of a well-known Napier identity Rodney Green, it boasts the best views of the inner-harbour available. Across the road where apartments have been erected not many people would know that another dump was situated on this site many years ago – I hope the architects knew this when designing these and allowed for any ground movement.

Behind the sailing-club was the only foot-access to Westshore unless you chose to use the old embankment road. This was the main road access to points North of Napier and I remember it well. It's still partially in use but only for walkers and cyclists and the EastCoast trunk railway. And the many times I've looked and wondered why and what does the offset part halfway across the bridge actually do – it's had me beat for years. Two big events that I remember were the Williams & Kettle fire on West Quay and the large petrol spill that almost cleared the Port - the fumes were overpowering. Both occurred in the 1950's. Whenever the Spit fire-brigade was called out the bush-telegraph went into action you didn't have to follow the brigade, just listen to the BT along Waghorne St - it told you everything.

Chapter4. Just to wind up my fond memories of being a Port-ite I can never forget some of the identities that come to mind – jeez it wouldn't have been the Port without them. Ten-Jug-Hug was almost a permanent fixture in the Crown Hotel. Where did he earn the name? – it's obvious.

Pissy-Percy was another who had to apologise to many a lamp-post for doing just that. The Boll-Weevil was a fisherman who challenged all the rules to the limit. He arrived back in Port one day after a days crayfishing and was met by a Dept of Fisheries inspector who had long suspected undersize catches. The Boll-Weevil invited him to inspect the bag in question which he immediately tossed overboard and said go look for yourself or words to that effect. The inspector arrived back with a diver and a crane and impounded the vessel which was lifted out of the water along with the bag of interest. Reggie McNabb was a very likable, but handicapped guy who seldom went anywhere without his cart that he pulled behind. He lived by the Port school and walked most days up to our place for his groceries and would not leave until he got a cigarette. Mrs. McGrath was a Waghorne St resident who hailed from Taranaki. She earned the name of Taranaki Liz because she compared all and everything to Taranaki and in a particularly strident tone of voice.

Handsome Harris who could ride a push-bike faster than any-one else I knew – this to his great advantage.

Wally Hamlin was an old loner who lived in a packing-case with about twenty cats. It was very much a matter of holding your nose when in that vicinity.

Loony London was just that - harmless and friendly, but loony nonetheless.

Peg-Leg-Pete who just sat around waiting for the Crown to open.

A competition or challenge of sorts was sometimes held in one of the locals. This was to drink one dozen large bottles of beer in the normal trading hours - usually between 9am and 6pm. It was only ever accomplished to my knowledge just once - Boots did it. I also heard about the yard-of-beer challenges, but never got to witness them. Six-o-clock closing was the law in those days and rigorously applied – after-hours drinking was forbidden. Ahem.

And finally to my grandfather. He was an agent for a local bookie and no-one was allowed to go near the phone on Saturday afternoons when racing was on. Bets only. When I started to take an amateurish interest in the horses I asked him one day if would take my bet. He looked at me and said my horse has about as much chance as dodo, but

he still took the bet. The horse of course finished where he said it would, but you know he never took my money – strange that. Lesson learnt.

Well where are they now – those guys I used to knock around with. Len Hartley when he retired from cray-fishing took up part-time boat-building and still lives at the Port. His older brother Peter was a pretty good boatbuilder and sailor too.

Noel Pottinger moved to Sydney and has an apartment there – we usually stay with him when in OZ. Colin McKee, groomsman at my wedding, also lives in OZ – Perth I think. Not many would know he was once rated in the world top 10 speedway riders when he was riding in England. John Krey is a successful yacht-builder - also in OZ.

And not to forget the fair-sex. The Port had many real stunners and to name just a few there was Lois, Margaret and Denise Kersey, Maxine Plows, Dale Pirie, Glennis Sullivan, Dawn Moody, Noelene Watson, Jessie and Gladys Smith, Joanna Reid.

My grandparents celebrated 50 years of marriage in 1955 and I've been married to Shirley for nearly 50 years and have a daughter Tracey who lives in Napier and a son Craig in Perth – 6 grandchildren and a great-granddaughter somewhere. Something I wouldn't have thought possible all those years ago, but no regrets. My life now revolves around walking, cycling, bowling (sometimes) having a beer daily, watching SKY TV and sitting in front of a computer. Something of a nerd.

Sure I'm a Port-ite, but have lived now in Onekawa for over 40years. One day I'd like to return and relive in the Port, but that's for someone or something else to decide. Lotto perhaps. Certainly also good health and fair weather sailing.

One more thing about yours truly. In all my schooling days I never once wagged (apart from the pigeons), and never missed a day or arrived late during my 5year apprenticeship. I put it down to good parenting and living around good people down at the Port.

And I'm sure the same applied to the guys I used to knock around with.

Different life today is 'nt it.

Waghorne St today is virtually unrecognisable from my days there. Williams & Creagh, Barry's coalyard, Nivens Steel Works, fishing sheds, bakery, chemist, dairies, grocery, library, fire station, Port garage all gone. All replaced with new residential. Hardinge Rd going the same way, but I notice that one new block of offices still has vacancy notices pasted. I wonder if it's because of the chook-house across the road. When the winds of the sea the smell of fat frying is pretty nauseating – locals don't seem to mind though - there's no apparent objections from them. Kenny Rd has new inhabitants though – the Outlaws Motorcycle Club has a home there. A guy who I know on the wharf is a member and he reckons it's not a bad place – just loud music and the odd pint or two. No nonsense either they keep their house clean.

Here now roughly alphabetically are some of the nick-names of the wharf characters I recall, with a lot of help from Vidar and Thor. If you want their identities just ask around – someone will know them.

Arfur Mo, Ahoy, Aussie Bob.

BookEnds, Blue & Spew, Boss Hogg, Boy George, Banger, Big Bad John, Bonza Boy, Blackadder, Boss Hogg, the Badger, Bubbles. Budda, Ball Bearings, Billy the Bus,

Butch, Bunny, Buzz, Bubbs, Blue Teal, Brylcream, Buddy, Big Foot, Buck, Big Dipper, Buckets, Big Head, Bomber, Big John, Brown Eye.
 Cooza, Close to Home, Chuckles, Crikey Dick, Cardigan Bay, the Crusher, Crazy Horse, Cowboy, Cactus, Car-boot George, Chicken legs, Cabbage, Catsnackers, Chewing Gum, Crazy Pony, Corned Beef, Coogie Bear, Chook, Caffer Kicker, Curly, Camp David, Chick, Cobweb Wallet, Charm, Crusher, Cobber, Chalky, Carter Brown, Coconut.
 the Duke, Dirty Denis, Driftwood, Double-it Sam, Dick Turpin, DingDong, Dumbo, Diesel, Dracula, Dodo, Doods.
 Evil Weevil, Eddy-the Eagle, Easy.
 Fresh Air, Foxy, the Frog, Flotsam & Jetsam, the Federated Farmer, Farmer Brown, Fagan, Floppy Disc, Friar Tuck, Flat Battery, Flower, Fog, Flipper, Faulty Towers.
 Great White Hunter, Gigantor, Giveaway Stan, Ghost Who Walks, Guy of Gisborne, Gearbox, Granite, Grumpy, Greenstone, Gig, Gold Finger, Gubay, Gary Glitter.
 the Hanging Judge, Hooker, Ho, Hec the Horse, Happy Larry, Howards Way, look Hugh's Talking, Hello Sailor, High Voltage, Hitler, Huck, Home Style, Happy Homo.
 IceMan, Ivan the Terrible, I Help You, Irish.
 Jimmy the One; j-j-jJohn, Jungle Bunnies, Jumbo, Justice, Junior, Jonah, Jock, Joe90.
 Kreskin, Keith the Thief, KneeHi.
 Lost in Space, Lenny the Lip, the London Docker, Lofty, Legs, Les Miserables, Lotti.
 the Maori Stevedore, Mouth-Organ, Maxwell Smart, Mississippi Gambler; Mother, Mad Bill, Mouth from South; Mirror Man, the Major, Mossie, Motor Mouth, Mocky, Mouth on a Stick, Mr.Smooth, Mike the Pole, Mad Dog, Muscles, Meeanee Doug, Needle, Noodle, Nugget, Noddy, Number Seven.
 Ozzie Wog, the Oracle, One Ball Bill, Otago Bob.
 Palooka, Peter Pan, Popeye, the Poet, Pigdog, the Phantom, Paddy the Jeweller, Paddy, Prince William, Putta, Possum, PinchHill Miser, Pip, Peeping Tom, Pop, Puketapu Doug, Peter PuffPuff, Punjab.
 Far Q2, Quasimoto.
 the Rat, Robin Potts, Red Heckle, Ringo, the Reliable Boy, Robbie the Body, Rommell, Red, Rumours, Rust, Ringo, Radar.
 Stand-by-Stan, Slippery, Seaweed, Saigon, Smash&Grab, Splinter, Shady, Scruffy, Starboarder, Suitcase Charley, Spartacus, SuperGoof; Stony, Snowy, Sly Bacon, Siggie, Spot, Sandy, Swooper, Spider, Stoddy, Splinter, Squeekey, Spongero, Skippy, Smuggles.
 Tic-Tok, Thickmick, the Taupo Tonsil, TenJugHug, Twisty, Tiki, The Pole, Tracker, Thimbo, The Beachcomber, Tangle Foot, Tegal, Twiggy, Tickle.
 Undertow.
 the Vegetarian; Vampire.
 the Whale, Whitebait, Whitey, Wild Colonial Boy, Wheels; Woodstock, Wellington Womble, Wrinkles, Whiskers.
 Yellow Pages, Yogi.
 Ziggy.

Some of the wharf lingo included Wanganui-em, This & That, BelowBelow, Get ahead Trick, Stand-by-the Hall, Stand-by the-Crown, Win the Toss, Put a Wall up, Dollar-a-Heave, Make-em up, the Boards up, Work-to-Rule, Official Puddle, Extra Man, Spare Man, Graveyard Shift, Spelling.

There is also a paper-back publication about life on the wharves – well worth reading and an article in Issue 33, 2011 Maritimes magazine remembering the “Big Blue of 1951” also well worth a read.

Again I apologize to any offence and errors I made, but it was just my memories right or wrong. I stand corrected where necessary.

James Otton Jan/Feb/March 2012.

Additional included material and thanks to Noel Pottinger, Vidar Kroggsetter, Thor Larson, Len Hartley.*

Port Memories Supplement July 2013 v2

Includes photographs

Just to clarify the Port area as it was known, was bounded from Battery Point which overlooked the South Pond, along the bottom of Scinde Island via Battery Rd and up to the Napier wharfs, then back along the length of Breakwater Rd and Hardinge Rd. Battery Point was named after the garrison which was stationed on the hill there. The original harbour was further round Scinde Island in Onepoto Gully between Pandora Point and Hope Point – named I suspect as the points used in shipping navigation. I have included early photographs of the Port area which show both ponds and the businesses and roads.

Since my '**Port Memories**' was completed it went viral with requests for a copy from all around NZ and OZ, the UK and Scandinavia. I e-mailed out about two hundred copies and about fifty hard-copies and thanks to Roger Moroney of Hawkes Bay Today libraries around NZ have also received copies. Various comments received have thanked and congratulated me also. But with those thanks also came comments like you didn't mention so-and-so and you forgot this-and-that and you got this wrong. All OK with me because it was just as I remember so errors would be made. Gil Cooper for one sent me his own thoughts and comments which amounted to about eighteen hundred words – all good stuff so anyone wanting a copy of his memories let me know.

Joanna Waddell (Reid) sent a very nice letter on her memories of living at the Port and has been living in Western Australia since 1969. Her sister Patricia has lived in Denmark over forty years and she also received a copy of '**Port Memories**'. Joanna became World President of Occupational Therapists and traveled the world in that capacity. Well done Joanna. It was their mother who made my wife Shirley's wedding dress in 1962. Other Port people wrote on who they worked for at the Port - where they lived – what their parents did. Bronwyn Jones (Boyd) parents owned Boyd's delicatessen and she worked in the chemist shop and Ellison & Duncan wine and spirits and she jogged my memory on Horrie Robson. Horrie lived over a century and played tennis all his life. Not bad for another Port-ite. Sorry I omitted the Robson's from Coronation St roll-call but they were another family who did much for the Port School Balls.

Kenny Knowles sent me photographs of the Baron Kinnard which took a pounding in rough weather off Napier and returned to port with three cranes hanging over her side. Meanwhile Bernard Knight (Fresh Air to his workmates) did something similar in October 1985 when he brought the jib down on the Jebson Southland in port.

Ten-Jug-Hug brought many comments and laughs – even from his own family. As did the Boll-Weevil – he actually was my neighbour in Ossian St. When his boat was impounded it didn't worry him at all – he simply built another in his backyard and hired a crane to lift it over his house.

SO after much thought (and probably regret) I have decided to put out this supplement with all those comments and other amendments. Here goes.

I mentioned in my **Memories** that I was apprenticed to Faulknor Construction Co – I should've mentioned that there were currently ten other apprentices in the 'Firm' as it was called. Now there wouldn't be ten carpentry apprentices in Hawkes Bay.

Going through the **Memories** I mentioned the three hotels in the Port, but forgot about another three long gone. They were the 'Shakespeare' at the foot of Shakespeare Rd

(the old buildings are still there and later became a crematorium), the 'Commercial' at the intersection of Waghorne and Custom St's and the 'London' (later the London Boarding House and later the ghost house to us kids) and to where John O'Dowd moved his dairy to. John eventually closed up and went to work at the airport for close on thirty years. Some of the publicans in my time included Bill Anderson and Don Tyson at the 'Crown', Roy Pilkington at the 'Union' and Arthur Harris at the 'Railway'. The 'Railway' at the intersection of Bridge and Lever St's later closed and the licence transferred to the new 'Blue Water' hotel at the head of West Quay and now under the patronage of Napier philanthropist Rodney Green and whose father was well-known traffic-cop Jack Green.

I questioned the route the tramway took from the intersection of Shakespeare & Battery Rd's and got mixed replies, **but yes, now I know**. It definitely went along Waghorne St. I have photographs of the tracks from both ends of Waghorne St – so that's that. End of discussion. My grandfather would be proud of me since he was also a trammy.

Maurie Green's fish n' chips were certainly among the best, but I forget to mention that previously the business belonged to Walkers. On Mondays when fresh bread was unavailable school lunch orders were the order of the day at Walkers and it didn't take long to realise that two six-penny orders were better value than one-shilling worth. I think that's how it went or maybe it was two three-penny orders beat six-pence worth. Alan Shepherd had the pie-shop in the Port shopping area which he turned into memorabilia about boxing – Alan had been a pro-boxer in his day and a pretty good one too. You wouldn't want to mix it with him if you valued your health. Mrs. Quigley had the beauty/hairdresser parlour in Waghorne St and Murtons manufactured agricultural products in Coronation St.

The Spit Fire Brigade as it was known as in Waghorne St, was almost a family affair with names like Hirini, Howe, Sweeney, Downing on the roster. I don't recall any bad accidents through negligence or bad practice from those locals – the worst incidence being the fireman who was badly burnt on being trapped in the Williams & Kettle fire in the late fifties, but he came with the Napier crew who attended. I know his identity, but in respect to his family I'll keep his name confidential.

I also mention the storm that hit the breakwater in 1974 and almost swamped the harbour. I have obtained photo's of the storm damage and they are also included. I remember some of the older men (and the Chief Engineer) who worked there, witnessing the damage all shaking their heads and not quite believing what they were seeing happening. The pulp-timber carrier Hop Chong broke heavy manila mooring-lines like paper – it was as well the harbour-tugs were on stand-by and got her under control. The vessel made it to the fairway before much of her deck-cargo went overboard – some to be washed up, some never recovered and lost for ever.

Another major incident occurred when the tanker Amokura hit the Kirkpatrick wharf while attempting to berth on September 14th 1986. She somehow got out of control and collided heavily with the fendering just beyond her starboard bow creating a gash about twenty meters long by two meters across and not too much above water-line fortunately.

Stuck in her side was a large rubber fender. I am unaware how much fuel she lost, but for days there was a strong smell of petrol in the area. Photographing was officially forbidden, but I managed to obtain one or two anyway. Again these are included. Other shipping that I recall include the then largest cargo vessel to call - ShawSavill's 'Dominion Monarch', the 'Gothic' (used for Royalty), Port Line vessels, BlueStar, Nedlloyd and others. Maersk container vessels are the largest callers nowadays - they are also the world's largest shipping line. The 'Dominion Monarch' was used as a troop-carrier in WW2. Most regular callers were known as 'home-boats' because their cargoes generally were frozen meat bound for the UK, but soon Japanese, Far Eastern, Australian shipping increasingly called for cargo and with all this extra and larger shipping the harbour required constant dredging, and so the bucket-dredge 'Whakarire' was purchased to maintain a deeper harbour and fairway. You always knew when the 'Whaka' was working with the grinding of the buckets being heard all over the place, but she did a good job for many years. When I was with 'Napier Harbour Board' one of my jobs as ganger was to replace any damaged fendering. When any pilings needed replacement and could not be pulled by conventional methods we would hook-up the Whaka at low tide and wait for the high tide to pull the piles - it was slow, but always worked. The Whaka eventually ended her days and was towed off to Singapore for scrapping, but to see how big her buckets were there is one outside the Custom House. Napier may be a small port by many standards, but has nine berths capable of berthing ships of many thousands of tons. Some of today's ships that call weigh in at over fifty thousand tons and include container and bulk vessels unheard of when I started there - then they were usually around five thousand tons. I have seen all these berths taken at once while up to ten further ships were waiting at anchor. This of course was when a large labour force was required to work them. Just one ship loading apples for instance on two shifts could have over a hundred men working her, while today's ships might only require around twenty men at most. John Black was head-man in the waterfront bureau which allocated the labour and he knew every man by his bureau number (mine was 271). You tried to put it over John at your peril - a couple of weeks in the meat-trucks or pulling-covers was your fate. Just ask LK - the Marist boy. Personally I always found John Black very fair - he would always help you if you needed a break away for any reason.

Many naval ships called at Napier over the years. HMS Hood, the pride of the Royal Navy and which was sunk in May 1941 by the German pocket-battleship Bismarck, anchored in the roadstead on May 9th 1924. She was part of a Special Service Naval Squadron which included HMS Repulse and four light cruisers. HMS Repulse was later sunk by the Japanese air-force off Malaya in 1941. The cruiser HMS Belfast also called at Napier on March 8th 1946. New Zealand, British, Australian and American ships were always welcome callers and not only by the Jungle Bunnies either.

Two American ships of interest were the USS Wadsworth and the USS Bear of Oakland. The Wadsworth in March 1984 was rumoured to be capable of carrying nuclear-arms and anti-nuclear campaigners commenced land and seaborne protests to stop the ship from entering port. They were unsuccessful of course, but that did not deter the estimated 3500 locals from visiting the ship on an Open Day. The Bear of Oakland was square-rigged with a steam auxiliary and used by Admiral Byrd as a support ship to the Antarctic in January 1934. Ships of RNZN include the Black Prince, Taranaki, Lachlan, Waikato,

and Canterbury while two submarines HMS Thorough and HMAS Orion have called. The largest passenger ship that I saw was the Cunard liner Queen Victoria a couple of years back. I went up onto Bluff Hill for a better look and ended among thousands of others. It was worth it as I got some great photographs of her. That same time was an Art Deco week and the RNZAF were putting on formation flying displays over the ship which made it a spectacular occasion. But for a lot more on ships and shipping and the people that made the harbour and the Port work, reference Jock Stevenson's books 'Port and People' and his subsequent supplement. Also Don Wilkie's 'Port to Port'.

The records of maritime log-books show no fewer than seven vessels were wrecked between the Port and Bay View and five in particular have always interested me. One was the Northumberland of 2095 tons which can still be seen opposite the beacons at low water. She was sunk by a storm in 1887 with a large loss of life while the Union Steamship Co's Boojun which went to her aid also foundered with all hands except one lost. Third is the tragic collision between the work-boat Doris and Richardsons vessel the TuAtu in 1932. The Doris was returning to port after working a shift on the Port Brisbane in the roadstead with thirty men aboard, while the TuAtu was outward bound to Wairoa on her daily run when the collision occurred. Ten men lost their lives in the worst maritime disaster ever in Napier. Four is the Montmerency - the fully-rigged vessel destroyed by fire and wrecked in 1867 opposite Spriggs Park in Hardinge Rd and which also can be seen at low water. It was rumoured she was torched by some crew members who had met some of the local girls and wanted to remain in NZ rather than return to the UK. The fifth wreck the boiler of which has been visible along Hardinge Rd longer than I remember, belonged to Capt Andrew Smith who also lived in Hardinge Rd. It is the remains of his fishing-trawler wrecked during the depression era and Joanna and Patricia Reid mentioned earlier are his grand-daughters. One interesting item I was unaware of is a war regulation that states that all vessels on entering or leaving the harbour must show their navigation lights or will be fired on without warning. I would have thought that by showing navigation lights could be a dead give-away to any enemy shipping or land-based spies, but who knows. Finally on maritime matters I remember well the German flagged ketch Te Raupunga owned by a Capt George Dibbern who fled Germany when the Nazis took control and sailed to NZ. Both he and his vessel, which sat for many years in the Iron Pot, were impounded until well after the war when they were released.

So getting back to some Port locals who made it good include all sections of the armed services both male and female. The merchant-navy had numbers of Port people of course being a sea-side community while Gilbert Howell would surely have won mastermind competitions with his brains. He was a top scholar and won university degrees. His family were neighbours of ours and many times I saw Gilbert making such things as radio crystal-sets when we at primary school together. Mechanno was another of his abilities. Jack and Olive Boatwood lived next to them with an empty section alongside and before Jim McEachen and his family moved in that section owned by Williams & Creagh used it to store their horse floats. John Krey, John Robson, Len and Peter Hartley, Bob Gunson, Fred Graham where all top boat-builders and sailors while Colin McKee made the top ten in the world in speedway while his brother Ken became a top man with NZED. My father Harry was one of the original Four-Square grocery owners

in NZ while his father Syd Otton, drove the first tram down Hastings St in July 1922 while my mother's father Bill Connell was keeper of the lighthouse on Bluff Hill just along from the Napier prison, before moving to Berampore in Wellington where my mother Ina was born.

I mentioned the movie 'Rock Around the Clock' which hit NZ in 1956. Well I reckon Potty and I saw that movie about six times and indeed I have it on video, but now my VCR is passed its use-by date and that fact that they are off the market for both repair and replacement I now have fifty odd tapes that are redundant – but that's another tale. Potty and I actually traveled to Wellington to see that movie (flick as we called them) so that's once, four times in the old Gaiety theatre in Dickens St and once in the fire-station in Tennyson St. Yes that's right, the fire-station had movies every Sunday night open to the public and we were regular patrons. We would walk up and over Milton Rd to go to the movies or sometimes go to the radio station 2YZ whenever they had a live-studio show called CURTAIN CALL. There was no movie-theatre down at the Port – no television either.

The Port being in the geographical area that it is had for some time a real problem in receiving any decent sort of signal for television transmission. Eventually some of the residents managed to link with a transmitter in Wairoa for a reasonable signal, but a reliable signal was almost impossible until satellite transmission became available and that's why we went into town for most entertainment. Monthly inglesides excepting. We did have a pretty good scheme though to call for a taxi from public phone-booths. By rapidly tapping the phone number out on the hand-piece cradle it was possible to use the phone without inserting two pennies – a lot of money saved for other purchasers.

Two other fond memories, among others, I have of living at the Port was during the 1951 waterfront strike or lock-out (depending whose side you were on). Our place in Waghorne St backed onto the railway that served the wharf traffic and of course all the locos were coal fired steam-driven. The government of the day forbade any form of charity to the waterfront workers, but the railway workers were generally in sympathy. Just by pure accident I'm sure, coal was dropped along the tracks most days and me among others salvaged what we could for our own coal-burning stoves. Great guys those railway folk. The other fond memory is entirely different. Just along from our place there grew and still grows a large pohutukawa tree which now must be well over a hundred years old. It was a great tree for kids to climb and hopefully still is – if they're allowed.

Recently I was invited to go on a bus-trip with about forty members of a local Probus Club around the Port area and to give a commentary as we drove around. This turned out to be a good event with many appreciative of comments and points of interest. I said that the Port was always referred to as that – the Port or pre-earthquake as the Spit. The two exceptions were the official names of the Port Ahuriri School and Port Ahuriri PostOffice but all else was simply the Port. The bus-driver however was a Maori woman who took exception to that and suggested that I needed re-educating and should pay more respect to Maori names and history. Some of the Probus people were upset and apologized to me, but I really wonder if it's me who needs re-education. Anyway I was asked for and passed on about twenty copies of 'Memories' so that sought of made up for that.

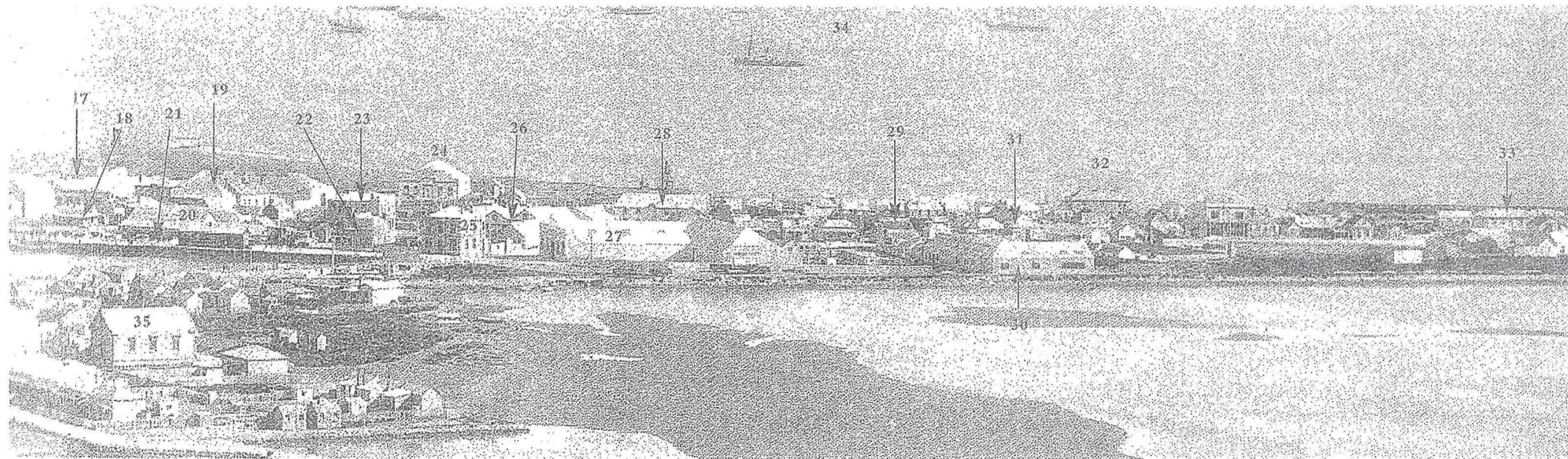
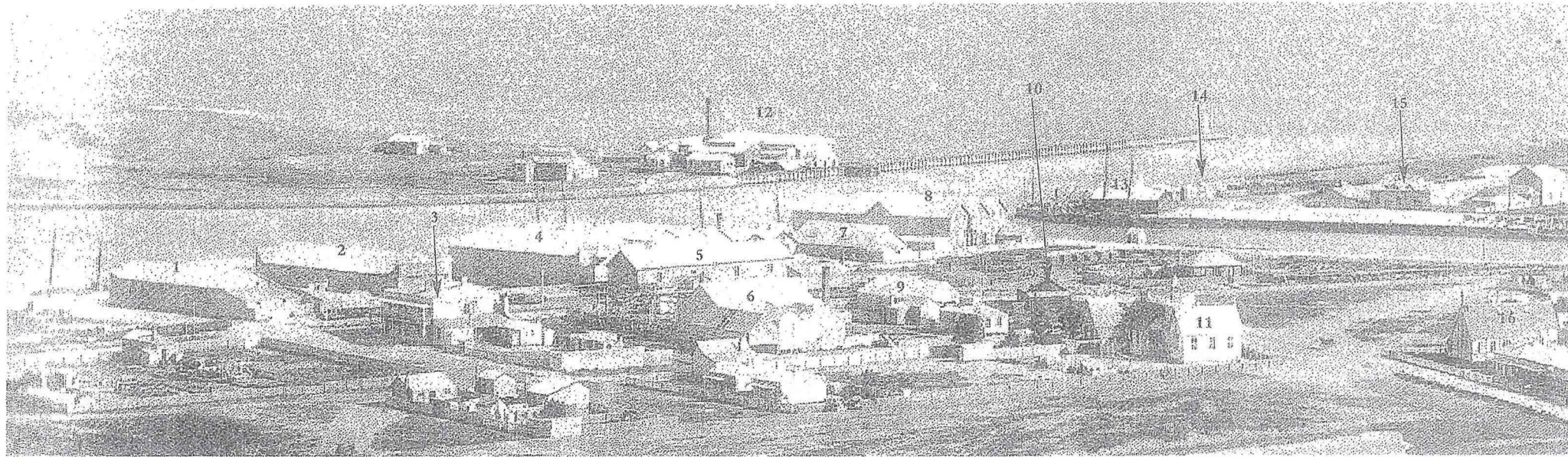
I should have mentioned earlier the harbour area along West Quay and Iron Pot was known as the Inner harbour as distinct from Napier port proper. Things changed dramatically on February 3rd 1931 when an earthquake struck and totally devastated Napier central area as well as the Inner harbour leaving a death toll in Hawkes Bay of hundreds, while the land rose about six feet and created a large amount of new land for later development, but that was the end of the Inner harbour for larger shipping and the north and south ponds. And also the end of the trams in Napier, but not the only reason why. I recall my grandfather telling me that the tramway went along Hastings St to Warren St and the plan was to continue it to the terminal at TeAwa. Problem was the railway crossing - who would have the right of way? A bridge was considered, but who would pay for it? The government and local council both declined so the extension was left in limbo for a number of years. The answer came with the earthquake – no tracks ,no trams. Buses would now be the transport to the Port over Shakespeare Rd. Now of the service is still continuing, but restricted. The new tourist coaches look good and are regular, but the patronage is really slack. I reckon they are a holiday service only – the cost to us ratepayers must be enormous. In our time every night except Sunday's buses would run from town to the Port after the flix and were usually full.

Well I can't think of anything more to say. It's been an interesting journey recalling my upbringing at the Port – the people who worked and lived there – the businesses who operated there – the Port school and the Balls – the shipping , railways, transport firms, fishing industry, woolstores, in fact everything that the Port was and to us Port-ites still is – a great place to live and to have been a part of. I repeat from my opening page – “You can take the people out of the PORT, but you can't take the PORT out of the people”. Finally I was a member of the Napier Cosmopolitan Club for over fifty years until just recently when it closed due to a lack of patronage – some of us say a lack of leadership. And all of the above industries had their own watering-tables in the ‘Cossie’. You sat at one of their tables only if invited - but just like the Port you were never turned away.

So what do I do in my retirement years you might ask. Well I'm into computers- I understand how they operate by using the binary mathematical system and I can convert binary to decimal and vice-versa. I know a fair bit about the Higgs boson and that the amount of energy tied up in the Higgs field per cubic meter is more energy than the sun outputs in a thousand years and which should blow the universe to bits – it does'nt and nobody knows why. Interesting is'nt it. Oh and I understand that $e=mc^2$. Nuclear physics? – so easy even a computer can do it.

James Otton.

ps The reader may well find discrepancies – Sorry but I call it writers licence.



1 Williams & Kettle No2 store, 2. Dalgety Store, 3. Railway Hotel, 4. Banner & Liddle, 5. stor-
age shed opposite the railway station, 6. Robert Holt sawmill, 7. John Orr, 8. Murray Roberts;
9. Merton & White, 10. Riddells forge, 11. Port School, 12 North British & H.B. Freezing
Works, 13. cargo sheds, 14. lifeboat shed, 15. Richardson, 16. St Andrews, 17. Ellison & Duncan,

Williams, 21. Nelson Quay, 22. N.Z. Fisheries, 23. Union Hotel, 24. Kinross & Co, 25. Union
Steam Ship Co, 26. Dalgety & Co, 27. N.Z. Loan & Mercantile Agency Co store, 28. Robjohn
& Co, 29. Nelson General Store, 30. Gallaway & Niven, 31. Hodgson, Bowler & Co iron-
founders, 32. Richardson's boarding house, 33. London Hotel next door is Rolls Bakery, 34