

DAY TRIP TO HISTORICAL ŌTAKI

SUNDAY 11th JUNE



St Mary's, Pukekarakā. Copyright: NZ Historic Places Trust. Photograph by Helen McCracken

Onslow Historical Society has arranged this trip and is giving Karori Historical Society members the opportunity to join them to view some notable historical aspects of Ōtaki. Please contact Angela Hill on 479-5580 with any questions about the day.

The bus departs from K.A.T.E., 86 Khandallah Road, Khandallah at 9am. We expect to leave Ōtaki at 4pm with an arrival time back in Khandallah around 5pm.

We have been able to negotiate a very favourable rate on our bus hire. Total price for the day's activities is \$50-00. This includes all bus transport, morning tea, a roast lunch and venue koha.

Please reply as soon as possible and follow these instructions to register for this event.
Registrations close Friday 2nd June.

To book your place you must contact:

John Galloway 478-7603 or jghgalloway@slingshot.co.nz

Then send your cheque to:

Onslow Historical Society, 86 Khandallah Road, Khandallah, Wellington 6035

Or directly deposit to the Society's bank account 01-0527-0006628-00 with Ōtaki and your surname in the reference fields.

HISTORICAL ŌTAKI PROGRAMME

Morning tea will be served upon arrival at Ōtaki.

We view the current exhibition at the Heritage BANK Museum and will be given a curator's talk by Rex Kerr.

The exhibition marks the centenary of the sinking of the *SS Ōtaki* on 10th March 1917. The *Ōtaki*, a refrigerated freighter owned by the New Zealand Shipping Company, was engaged in a battle with the German auxiliary cruiser *SMS Möwe* in the mid-Atlantic Ocean.

The *Möwe* was crewed by naval personnel and bristled with guns; the *Ōtaki* had only one small stern-mounted gun and a crew of 71. In the ensuing battle, the *Ōtaki* set the *Möwe* on fire, but was ultimately subdued by the greater fire power of the *Möwe*. The *Ōtaki*'s Captain Smith received a posthumous Victoria Cross for his bravery in this action and several other officers and crew were also decorated.

The Heritage BANK Museum (established in 2003) is housed in the former Ōtaki Bank of New Zealand building, built in 1918. As one of the most historic and prominent buildings on Main Street, it was the Council Chamber for the Ōtaki Borough Council from 1967 to 1989 and housed the local service centre of the Kapiti Coast District Council until 1998.

The building has been restored, by the Ōtaki Heritage Bank Preservation Trust, from its near derelict condition to a state that reflects and respects its historic beginnings. It incorporates fine timber panelling, an elegant staircase, stained glass windows and beautiful pressed metal ceilings.

A roast lunch will be served at Poppies Restaurant, Ōtaki RSA.

The afternoon takes us to see and hear, from a member of the Hepata family, the story of Rangiātea Church. In 1995 the original church, which opened in 1851, was burnt down by an arsonist. The Ōtaki community rallied and raised funds to build a replica, which opened in 2003.

We conclude our day with a visit to St Mary's Church, Pukekaraka, built in 1858-1859. It is considered to be New Zealand's oldest surviving Catholic church still in use. The Marist Fathers established a mission station on this site in 1844. Irene Mackle is our host.
