

RECOLLECTIONS OF KAWAU ISLAND DOCUMENTED BY MR. BOB EDWARDS WHO LIVED ON KAWAU ISLAND FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. RECEIVED BY KEITH PRESLAND ON 19 APRIL 1991. TYPED BY FLO PRESLAND.

In 1926 the small island just off Mansion House, the one we call The Happy Jack, (Martello Rock) was used for shelling practice by the H.M.S. Dunedin and H.M.S. Diomedes until stopped by the Marine Dept. The small rock was left so it would not be a navigational hazard.

Kawau was owned by a Mr. Farmer who went into liquidation and the island was cut up; Lawford Reeves buying Mansion House and I think 10 acres. The Mansion House as I knew it was covered in ivy, there being very little view out of the windows.

On the left of the main building were the servants quarters, and across the back were the stables and livery rooms. At the back of the house was an old tin shed which was used as a store room, and a counter which was used to sort the mail, the mail arriving once a week on a Thursday.

Thursday was the day the steamers arrived from Auckland bringing mail and stores, it was a great day for the islanders who arrived in their runabouts, inboard motors in those days, outboards were yet to come.

The Northern Co. ran the service using the SS Omana commanded by Capt. Donovan, and the SS Kawau commanded by Capt. Heatly. One week it was a daylight trip, and the next a night trip, as they had to work the tides in the Matakana river.

The trip from Auckland was quite interesting, calling first at Emptage Island (Motuora), Mr. Emptage coming out in a big punt with his cream, which was taken aboard and stores put into the punt. The next stop was Scandretts at Mullet Point. Same thing there, out in a punt with wool and picking up their stores and mail. Next was Goldsworthys and Algies, then across to Mansion House. From there to Sandspit, unloading mail etc. The farmers came on horseback and sledge as there was no road and they had to cross the creek where the Motor Camp is now. Also the steamer loaded shark fins and shark oil from the shark factory opposite the wharf, the fins bound for China.

Mail bags were delivered to the farms up the river, and to the Matakana P.O. as there was no service to Warkworth it being a clay road. Butter was loaded at Matakana, the steamer sailing the next day or night, calling at Kawau for mail and passengers for Auckland.

On Sundays during the summer months, the SS Duchess ran trips to Kawau carrying about two thousand two hundred passengers, the skipper on the SS Duchess was Eddie Wann.

In 1927 the cockies bought their own boat, the Settler, and ran a service but could not compete with the Northern Co. They went out of business and the Omana and Kawau continued the service.

Lawford Reeves had three daughters, Nora the eldest married a Wilson of Wilson & Horton who owned the Herald, the second Joan, married flying officer Kirk, the third daughter Mollie, married a Greek, Spiro Andros.

Spiro had a boat, I think it was called Sea Wolf. It was a forty two footer open boat, with th engine forard, covered with a dodger, and a seat running the length of the boat, the steering wheel abaft of the engine.

It was in the nineteen thirties when Spiro started making the odd trip to the Sandspit, it was the depression and relief workers had formed a road from Warkworth to Sandspit as far as Mrs. Rayner's farm, so anybody going by sea had to walk from there to the wharf.

At about this time a P.O. cable was laid from Mullet Point to Kawau, and a small switch board was installed at Mansion House, there being three party lines, and one line to Warkworth.

At about this time Spiro had his boat altered, I think Baillies did the job with Spiro helping, a wheelhouse, deck, sponsons, cabin, bulwarks and a mast were added. When finished she was renamed the Nancibell.

The Nancibell was powered with a H.G.M. motor, a three cylinder two stroke, air start, with a compressor to keep two bottles full of air. Only failing was the funnel, sooted up after a few weeks running and caught fire, bit unnerving for the passengers, as it belched out soot everywhere.

About 1934 Spiro ran a sort of service to the Sandspit, taking guests to the Mansion House, if the islanders wanted a trip he would pick them up or drop them off at the Mansion House, he also ran a trip to Auckland once a week.

The Northern Co. continued running til 1937. Road transport began taking the butter from Matakana to Auckland, the Kawau Matakana service was axed as it was not profitable, the end of an era for the steamers.

Spiro continued running till 1936, a culvert had been put over the creek at Mrs. Rayner's, so it was possible to get vehicles down to the wharf.

Gubbs Motors purchased the Nancibell, and built a block of flats at School House Bay, Kawau, also built a wharf, and installed a skipper Tui Brooker, who took over the Nancibell, and stayed till 1945. Gubbs started a three day service running Monday, Wednesday and Friday from the Sandspit, and to Auckland on Thursday from Kawau.

Two House Bay on the left as you enter Mansion House Bay, was owned by Teddy Nops, a very English gentleman who always wore plus fours. He owned quite a bit of Kawau, a large block in South Harbour, the Fairy Woods, and a block in Muddy Bay. (Harris Bay).

Silks was the first place in the Bon Accord Harbour, their house being on the hill. Mr. Silk would row a dinghy out to meet the

boat, later they built a wharf. Next was Fred Lidgard, and then Mrs. Calton who had a strong wharf. Round the corner in School House was McGills, the billiard table manufacturer. He owned a boat, the Inyala, a Brixton trawler, it was never sailed and remained on the mooring until sold to L.J. Fisher.

Mr. Ingram, a dentist from Auckland was next, he also had a wharf, and then Mrs. Mann, her house alongside Gubbs Flats, in the corner the old school house owned by Stan Sowerby.

Next came Muddy Bay or Harris Bay, where Patsy Butler lived, another English type who always came out in a runabout to meet the boat.

On to Poutneys, he was retired from Carr Poutneys, merchants in Auckland. I liked going to their bay at Xmas time, because the daughters came for their holidays and always swam naked.

Capt. Kidd was the next stop. They were very kind people, and always had a bottle of tea and scones or cake for the skipper. In the corner was Simpsons house (Stephensons), a woodcutter. Old man Spiers lived in the next bay, it was where Sir George Grey had a garden.

About a mile inland lived the King family, he also was a woodcutter. He had a wife and four kids, the eldest fourteen, the youngest three, and they lived in a one roomed corrugated iron affair with a big open fireplace, where all the cooking was done. The youngest girl fell into the fire, and was badly burnt, she survived but the pain must have been awful, as there was no Doctor.

On the other side of the harbour was a Mr. O'Neil, Commetti bought his place. Then to Aldridges, she lived in a house on a hill opposite School House Bay.

Out of the Bon Accord and round the corner to George Mills wharf, (Barkers) and into North Harbour. Mrs. Maitland lived in the old school house in North Harbour. The school had been closed for a long time, the man who owned the property left it to the Education Dept. when he died, about twenty acres I think. Eric Lees was the end of the line, except for Vivian Bay guest house, run by Mr. Vivian.

At Two House Bay, Mrs. Hill and her daughter lived in one of the houses, Mita, the engineer from Mansion House lived with them. He serviced the 110 volt lighting plant powered with a Lister diesel motor.

The woodcutters, King and Simpson, were employed by Bryant of Auckland to cut titree, haul and stack it on the beach at the head of the Bon Accord harbour, where it was loaded onto the scows Vesper or Owati. Hundreds of tons of firewood were taken from Kawau, the cutters getting two shillings a ton on the beach.

The Woods Chemical Co. started a factory in North Harbour, behind Eric Lees place, I think it was on his land. Titree was cut and processed, turning out stockholm tar, wood acetate, dye and charcoal, the products being transported to Auckland every Thursday by the Nancibell.

Eric Lees picked arum lillies around the island, crating them up and despatching them to the South Island.

The mail was sorted in the tin shed by Mrs. Frank Nops, daughter-in-law of Teddy Nops. Tui used to wait for the mail to be sorted and deliver it with their parcels, it saved them a trip to Mansion House. On the mailbox outside the shed was the notice giving the times of clearance and on the box was the emblem of Edward the Seventh.

The war had started and Tui kept the Thursday trip to Auckland going. Having to report to the examination ship at North Head, I noticed in his log that he observed the periscope of a sub while passing the Beehive one night. He thought it was a Jap following him through the channel so he rang the Navy.

In 1944 Gubbs Kawau Services bought the Kororoa from the Air Force. The Kororoa was a thirty six foot launch with a large wheelhouse seating 15, a cabin, a large cockpit with a seat on the deck across the back. She was powered with a Chrysler petrol motor, which we changed to a Perkins diesel. It was found necessary to have two boats to keep the service running while the Nancibell was on survey.

I took over the Kororoa and did special trips from the Sandspit.

Mrs. Aldridge owned the land in Stockyard Bay. Her daughter Fay, was a member of the YWCA, and every summer held a girls camp there. The Nancibell brought the tents and gear from Auckland, the girls came by train to Kaipara Flats and then by bus to the Sandspit. One particular summer the girls arrived at Kaipara at 11p.m., arriving at the Sandspit after midnight. There were 33 kids between the ages of eleven and fourteen. It was a lousy night and I had a friend Alec, acting as deck hand for me. Each child had a kitbag, plus other stuff like tennis rackets etc. The luggage on its own was a load. We stacked it in the after cabin nearly filling it, the wheelhouse was full of kids, the rest were in the cockpit. Alec managed to rig a tarpaulin and when the rain came it pelted down, the wind was fresh from the north east with a fair sea running.

After clearing the Matakana river I set a compass course to North Harbour, there were no lights in those days, and I wanted to be well clear of Pine Island as visibility was nil. Having so many passengers in the wheelhouse put the boat down by the head, and she dipped her nose bringing up a lot of water which hit the windows with a wallop. In the light from the navigation lights it looked like big rainbows. The kids in the wheelhouse were not very happy, some were praying and I was asked if I thought God would look after us. It must have been quite frightening for them, not being able to see, and with waves breaking over the ship. I assured them we would make it alright, but I was not so happy when I remembered the lifebelts were stowed in the after cabin with a ton of luggage in front of them.

After about forty minutes it began to get calmer and I knew we must be getting near land, so I switched the lights off and was able to see the hills, the rain eased a bit, we came around the corner and the lights of the camp were a very welcome sight.

A punt had been anchored out, and we ferried the girls ashore, and then the rains came again flooding the tents, and we set to work digging trenches around them to get rid of the water. It was a muddy mess, I felt sorry for the kids, first a rough trip and now this.

Fay had hot soup for everyone which helped. When I got back to the ship, she had gone aground, and didnt float off until about seven in the morning.

The nineteen forties was all go at Kawau.

Reeves sold the Mansion House to a syndicate; Ray Vincent a truck dealer, Jack Paine a used car dealer, Corban a wine maker, and Headland an insurance assessor; there were others, Ray was Chairman, the others directors.

The syndicate got to work pulling the ivy off the walls, and painting the stone. They burnt Sir George Grey's old stables and livery rooms, and put up a block of flats in their place. This is the time Snow Stevens and Arthur Ainsworth arrived as carpenters to help build the flats. After he had finished, Snow went and helped Lidgard build his flash house. Jack and Alma Pender came to manage Mansion House.

The old tin shed/P.O. was renovated. Living quarters and a front were put on, turning it into a store with Mr. and Mrs. Bolton running it.

The freight from Auckland became too much for the Nancibell, so Gubbs gave it up and ran a service from the Sandspit every Thursday.

A Mr. Newton who lived in a house just around the corner at the bottom of the Bon Accord, had a boat, the Eva, I think, she was a thirty eight footer, flush deck with a hold and a derrick, and with the help of a skipper he ran a service from Auckland twice a week. He brought most of the building materials, the very heavy stuff coming by scow.

Teddy Nops son Frank was back from the war and with his wife Margaret, who had been the office girl at Mansion House, went to South Harbour, and built a house on the point. He owned the land as far as Bostaquet Bay.

Gubbs repowered the Nancibell with a L W Gardiner, giving her a top speed of twelve knots.

House ? Skin Hollows, a champion wrestler, arrived on a yacht with his wife and child, they got a job at Mansion House, bought a section in Muddy Bay and built a house and had another three kids.

Another yacht arrived in School House Bay, with two young chaps, the Baker boys, on board. One of the boys was a great fisherman, a kingfish came and circled their yacht daily, and became quite tame, the boys fed it by hand with bacon rind. After about a week they put a hook in the rind and kingfish was on the menu for a week.

Mrs. Aldridge owned the land in Stockyard Bay, and sold about three acres to a Mrs. Mangan. Mrs. Mangan arrived at Mansion House, and invited all the guests over to the bay for a picnic - she supplied the grog. I took them over in the Nancibell, putting them ashore in a punt. What the guests did not know was that a scow load of building materials was arriving, and they were to unload it ! I picked them up in time for dinner, very tired but very happy, the grog had done its work.

Just past Muddy Bay the section that Sam Mason bought, belonged to a Mr. Fell who got fed up with living on Kawau. His house caught fire about 2 a.m. one morning, someone who saw the flames rang me. I went down and Mr. Fell was sitting on the wharf with cases packed, I dropped him off at the Sandspit. The police came over and thought it was suspicious but had no proof.

At the entrance to North Harbour inside the reef was a house owned by Mr. Mills. Mr. Mills had a heart attack one night and I was called out to get a Doctor from the Sandspit. By the time we got back he was dead. He was buried not far from the house on a private plot, I guess it would be hard to find now.

The Syndicate sold Momona Point to Capt. Frank Hook, who moored his tug, the Iona, and barge, in Mansion House Bay, much to the annoyance of the yachties. He loaded sand from Omaha and once or twice a week took it to Craigs in Auckland.

The Syndicate cut a lot of pines at the back of Ladies Bay, which I towed to Orewa, letting the raft go in the breakers until the residents complained about the bark all over the beach. I had to stop, and the Lady Eva towed the rest to Auckland.

The Syndicate added twenty feet onto the wharf so the big boats would not go aground at low water.

I bought ten acres at Bon Accord Point and Pohutukawa Bay, so moved over from School House and put the Nancibell on a mooring. The first Xmas there, I beached the Nancibell stern first to clean the bottom, and in the morning there was only the mast showing, the tide had come in through the toilet and filled her up. After the tide had gone out she refloated, and was towed by the tug See Bee to Mason Engineering in Auckland.

The tug See Bee was skippered by Dig Stanaway, and as we had no boat to do the Sandspit trip he did a couple of days for us. As it was Xmas a lot of grog was consumed, that was all the payment they wanted. Young Elmore was one of the crew.

Mrs. Mann sold her house in School House Bay, to Charley Madigan, skipper of the floating crane in Auckland, and moved into Muddy Bay with the Elmores.

Lidgards built a boat shed and did boat repairs. They started a thirty eight footer to go to the islands in.

Gubbs sold the boats to Snow Waters, a boat builder from the North Shore, and I ran the Korora.

One evening, my brother-in-law and I were sitting on the verandah of the house, when I noticed a dinghy being rowed across the harbour. It was a bit choppy and suddenly it disappeared. I got out the binoculars and saw heads in the water. We rushed to the boat, I started the engine while my mate dumped the mooring and ~~then it was gone and disappeared.~~

then it was full speed ahead. When we reached them, there was a lady in a fur coat being held up by her husband. After a struggle we got her on board and threw the other man a lifebelt as he could not swim, and was hanging on to a beer crate. We got them all on board.

It turned out to be Rangī Allen and his wife, and Bob King, workers from Mansion House going to a party with three crates of beer and a console radio, all in an eight foot dinghy in a choppy sea.

*WALK TO
S/COKE*
Frank Nops was living at South Harbour, and I understand had a domestic dispute and took the dinghy to row across the harbour to Mansion House at about ten o'clock that night Mrs. Nops rang up saying Frank had not arrived home and was worried.

I got hold of Stan Sowerby and Les Bolton from the store, and organized a search. One of the navy ships was anchored off the bay and the Captain sent a party and boat ashore to help in the search.

?
We found the dinghy ashore at the end of the harbour, but no sign of Frank. We searched the banks and tracks but no luck. Frank was a very good swimmer so we thought he could not have drowned. The next day we got a fisherman to drag a net all down the harbour; still nothing. The tide was high early mornings, and Stan, Les and I searched the harbour with the Nancibell as the water was clear and on the third day we found him on the bottom a few yards from the beach where he launched his boat. The police were informed and Frank was left lying on the boat till late in the day as a hearse was not available.

Poplar Bay
Mr. de Murge arrived and bought the bay next to me, he had a big overseas yacht, he had just done a trip to the islands.

It was getting to the end of the nineteen forties and things had really moved. The Syndicate was negotiating with Allen Horsfall for sale of the Mansion House.

Water
Roy Lidgard launched his first ship built at Kawau, a thirty six foot motorsailer with a five foot six draught, named the Maire. Roy ~~had~~ had an idea he would sail her to the islands one day, but got short of money and sold her to de Merge who had a yachtmasters ticket and thought he would run passengers from the Sandspit against Waters. The Marine Dept soon put a stop to that and told him to get a proper ticket or else !

MAIRE
Allen Horsfall was now the proud owner of Mansion House, I think it was now 1950, and things started to move.

Horsfall built a ballroom in front of the dining room and a new annexe, did lots of advertising and the tourists started to come.

Horsfall wanted Waters to run a daily service from the Spit and always go to Mansion House first. Waters was a bit stubborn and was not going to be bossed about, and refused.

Horsfall was not the type to be put down, so he bought the Maire from de Merge, and put me in charge to run in opposition to the

Nancibell, and not charge the Mansion House passengers.

Waters did not last long. He sold up, the Nancibell going to Tauranga where she later sank through being overloaded with dive equipment.

The Mairie was not the ideal boat for the job as she was so deep the keel acted as a pendulum keeping her rolling in a sea way and making it very uncomfortable riding for the passengers. A bit of sail would have helped, that was what she was designed for.

The excursion boats started coming from Auckland, the first being the fairmile Iris Moana, commanded by Capt. Johnson. She kept up a weekly service for a long time.

Capt. Warren ran a Sunday service from Leigh in the G unner, a boat he bought from the Ministry of Works.

In 1952 Roy Lidgard built the Kawau Isle for Horsfall, I took command, and Skin Hollows took the Mairie. We ran a non stop service to the Spit, night and day no matter what the weather.

Mr. Newton gave up the service to Auckland, and the Onewa took over, Capt. Clarry Cresswell being the skipper. Les Bolton left the store and a brother-in-law of Jack Pender, a Mr. Fredricson took over. The first thing he did was get a licence to sell beer by the crate and he did well, with the Onewa bringing full loads.

42/10/1952 The Aotearoa came every Sunday through the summer till about 1954 and that was the sum total of boats serving Kawau.

Mr. de Merge sold out to Capt. MacFarland who built a block of flats and took in guests. He also bought the Glen Rosa and ran his guests around. He then put a skipper on and ran trips from Auckland.

Horsfall bought the Rotoiti from Rotorua and renamed it the Island Princess.

? Charley Wiese took over the Kawau Isle and I went onto the Princess. She was powered with a L W Gardiner, and quite a comfortable boat to ride in.

Capt Sowerby did the odd trip in the Florence Kennedy, but was more interested in fishing trips.

The Onewa stopped running and the Moratana started. He ran a good service coming twice a week when needed, he ran for about four years and sold it to the islands.

The Onewa came back again, but without its boiler. The new owners had put in a diesel motor and what trouble they had - always breaking down and running late.

Roy Lidgard built a large yacht for Draffin at his yard on Kawau, all the islanders going to the christening.

Jack Pender left the Mansion House, a Miss Sunny Reed taking over. I took over the store and post office, just doing special trips on

the Princess.

Horsfall took the beer licence away and got full licence for the House, and built a snake pit at the back of the kitchen for the yachties.

At Silks, Brian the champion golfer, built a bach at the end of the wharf, staying there during the Xmas period.

Mr. Calton died, and Mrs. Calton married a Gordon Herbert, they did not stay long after that and sold Sunny Bay to Frank Pidgeon of Pidgeon Tyre Co.

~~See~~ In School House, Ingram sold out to Clarks, and Sowerby sold a section to his brother-in-law, Bob Seldon, who built on the waterfront. *See previous*

I built in the corner on the other side of the creek (now Hurleys). Ray Eder of Arthurs Furniture Market, bought the point. Sam Mason bought Fells burnt out house and built again.

? Mr. Dallow, father of Superintendent Dallow, Chief of Police in Auckland, built a house on the point at the end of the Bon Accord.

Mrs. Beech bought old man Spiers out and moved into the same old house (Pah Farm).

Mr. Bilger bought a large block of land at the end of the harbour, his sons became champion yachtsmen.

Bob Parker bought a few acres up the end of the arm that runs up to the left of the harbour, later bought by Mr. Freeman.

On the corner, Mr. Newton sold to Mr. Stack a journalist, and Capt Grey built a house on the point which he later burnt down, when he was fed up with living on Kawau.

Mr. O'Neil sold to Commetti who built a flash house, and retired with his family.

Tommy Webb came to work for Lidgards and lived in a bach behind the old smelting works, Snow Stevens married Dell, a relation of Lidgards, and moved down to Kidds place.

Mr. Rumble bought Mrs. Aldridge's place.

Brin Wilson bought Speedy Bay and built a house. Brin was a boat builder and went to work for Lidgard. Later he got his own yard in Auckland.

? Mr. Fremlyn bought Mr. Mills place and later died there, being buried in Auckland.

Mr. Maitland died, Mrs. Maitland wanted him buried on Kawau at the cemetery on top of the hill overlooking School House, and asked me to make the arrangements for the digging of the grave and transport from the Mansion House wharf.

At the cemetery are the graves of the fifteen children who drowned when their punt overturned while crossing the harbour to go to school.

The two Baker boys said they would dig the grave if I supplied them with beer. They started early in the morning and when I saw them at lunch time they had a hole about three feet deep and six feet wide, their idea was to put a big mound over the coffin. I pointed out their mistake and down to six feet they went, but what a hole ! They were quite happy, they had only drunk half the beer.

Stan Sowerby had a horse named Fanny and a sledge, so I asked him to take the coffin from the wharf to the cemetery, there were no cars on the island, as a matter of fact, no roads, only tracks.

I picked up the coffin, Mrs. Maitland and some mourners from North Harbour, and took them to Mansion House. Stan was there waiting, we placed the coffin and flowers on the sledge, Stan started off and the mourners walked behind.

Now Fanny only had one speed, that was flat out, the mourners started out at a slow speed, but got faster and faster and in the end had to give up the pace and let Fanny go ahead. After passing Ladies Bay they caught up with Fanny, she was tied to a tree and Stan was hauling the coffin out of the scrub where it had rolled. All was made shipshape again and away they went, once again Fanny soon leaving the mourners behind but they knew she was ahead as they began picking up flowers and wreaths. They did not seem to stay on the sledge. Stan lost the coffin one more time, and with great difficulty made the cemetery. It was a nice service and the boys made a good job of filling the grave in with a big mound to mark the spot.

Mr. Vivian sold to Barneys who turned the house into a guest house.

In North Harbour there was an old recluse named Alfie Gray. He lived at the end of the arm, had about one hundred acres and ran a few sheep. The story goes that Alfie sheared and slaughtered the sheep in the kitchen of his house as he had no shed. Alfie had a twelve foot punt powered with a Villiars engine, it look a heap of rust but always seemed to go one way. He would bring his wool to the steamer, but usually rowed back.

I sold Pohutukawa Bay to Mr. Duder.

Teddy Nops sold Two House Bay to Leighton of Leightons Driving School.

1950 or 1951 there were twelve kids on the island, and the school at School House Bay was reopened. Mr. Clemence and his wife were the teachers and lived in the school master's house next to the school. He was a very good teacher, teaching the kids to swim and taking them for picnics, I used to pick the kids up in the Mairie in the morning and take them home at night. The kids from North Harbour walked over the hill to Lidgards where they were picked up.

Mr. Allen, one of our skippers, took the Mairie towing a barge to the Spit late at night. At about eleven p.m. we picked up a May

Day call from the Mairie, she was sinking somewhere near Goat Island. A couple of staff and I put a portable pump on board the Kawau Isle and we picked him up off Goat Island. I took the barge in tow and the staff manned the pump, keeping her afloat till we reached the bay and beached her.

Whad had happened was coming out of the Spit, the Mairie touched the bottom and the barge caught up with her, stoving in a plank on the stern. However all was well, Sam Mason came round in the morning and fixed it up.

The Mairie was powered with a 66 h.p. three cylinder Kelvin straight drive with a cone clutch. These clutches have a habit of sticking in and we always had a big hammer close by in the engine room to belt it out.

One Xmas when the bay was full of yachts and launches, while reversing out from the wharf the clutch stuck in, I up with the hatch, stopped the motor and down into the engine room and gave the clutch a belt. While I was doing this the Mairie was going backwards bumping into boats on the way. What language the yachties used ! They could not see me as I was in the engine room starting the motor and it was a crank start.

When I took over the store, I was made maintenance manager of Mansion House and put in charge of the boats, not doing too much driving. I had the store for about five years, then sold to Arthur Gray, and went back to my own house in School House Bay, walking over the hill to work.

There were three main telephone lines, the three lines taking in Vivian Bay, North Harbour and the far side of the Bon Accord and my house, so I was there for any emergency if a boat was needed. I bought a boat, th Marhunga, thirty two foot double ender, powered with a chrysler petrol motor which I changed to a Ruston diesel.

One night just after midnight I heard someone ringing the phone trying to get the Post Office, they had no show as the Grays did not connect a night bell, as we did, when we had the Post Office. I answered it, and it was the Commettis. They had a fourteen year old niece staying with them and she was sick and wanted a doctor.

My son and I took the Marhunga around to Mansion House, and woke up the Grays, who let me into the Post Office. The power was shut off at midnight so it was impossible to ring Warkworth, I remembered the old crank we used to use before we had the power, so hooked it up and raised the doctor in Warkworth connecting him to Commettis.

The doctor told them to bring her over to Sandspit, where he would be waiting with an ambulance. I told him we would be over in an hour. I sent my son back to School House with the Marhunga as I was too low in gas to do the trip.

The Kawau Isle did a good twelve knots flat out, but unfortunatelly the batteries were out being charged, so I had to take the Princess, her top speed being eight knots.

I picked up the Commettis and the girl, arriving at the Spit a little after four a.m. Mr. Schumacher having given the girl mouth to mouth resuscitation all the way over on the boat. He had started at twelve thirty when the girl first got sick. It was a

hell of a trip over, the boat was so slow, and it seemed to take hours listening to Mr. Schumacher blowing air into the girl and gurgling as it came out. The doctor got her into the ambulance, put the oxygen mask on, and gave her heart massage, it was just daylight when he gave up, saying he could do no more, the girl was dead.

I went back to Kawau cursing all the way, cursing the Grays for not answering the phone, cursing Charley for not having the batteries in the Kawau Isle, cursing myself for not having enough fuel in the Marhunga, and the slowness of the Princess.

At the autopsy it was found that the girl had had a brain haemorrhage, and would have died within a few minutes - I felt a lot better after that.

I did a few private fishing and picnic trips with the Marhunga. I did not keep it long, and sold it to someone at Whangarei.

Snow Stevens had a launch, the Duchess, he did private trips as well.

Ian Walker came to work at Mansion House has a handyman, Mr. Bell of Bell Television had trouble with his motor on his launch, and Walker fixed it for him. They became great friends and Walker spent a lot of time on his boat.

There was a character by the name of Snow Harris, an alcoholic, but a very good boat builder. He worked long enough to get enough money to buy grog, and then would have a month off. If he could not get grog he would have a mixture of methylated spirits and condensed milk. He would go pye-eyed, and froth at the mouth, he was quite harmless, and ended up living alone on Moturekareka, paying Kawau a visit when he got thirsty.

I bought a fast boat from Timaru, licensed to carry twelve passengers and did twenty five knots, I used her for quick trips to the Spit mostly for the visitors of the islanders.

One of the last things I did before leaving the Island, was laying the power cable from Mullet Point.

It was a thick fog. After picking up the reel of cable from the Spit, we made our way to where they had two sticks in line. The fog was very thick. I managed to line up the stern with the sticks, and took a compass course and three hours later at about half a knot we made Goat Island. The cable was cut there, and we had lunch and continued to Kawau, landing the cable on Hooks Point.

The cable was connected up and two weeks later Walker was bulldozing Sir George Grey's old coach road and sliced it in half.

Mr. Whitaker came to North Harbour buying a piece of land on the left of the harbour and living on a scow. I cant remember its name I think it was the Lena. He lived on the scow for quite a time until he got his house built.

Between the top of the hill at School House and Silks there were two big mounds with a ditch around them, and a tree planted each end. On one mound someone had been digging into it, going in quite a way. Stan Sowerby told me that the mounds were the tombs of Maori chiefs and someone had dug into them to get the treasure

supposed to be buried there, and the Maoris put a tapu on the island. That is why no one has ever prospered on the island. This is the story I told the Mansion House guests when they rode on the mail run.

One weekend in 1952 it was blowing a full gale from the east. It was my weekend off, Jack Pender intended doing the trip to the Sandspit for me, but a couple of guests Mr. and Mrs. Leyland, timber merchants of Auckland, refused to go with Jack, they had no confidence in his seamanship, so sent for me. They need not have worried as the Mairie was a great boat in a following sea. I did the trip and Jack took over from Mansion House to take a passenger to Vivian Bay.

About an hour later I had a ring from Vivian Bay to say that Jack was having trouble getting away from the wharf and the Mairie was bumping on the bottom as there was a big swell rolling in. There was no other boat at Kawau to tow him off except the Kawau Isle, which Lidgards had. He had finished building her and she was launched ready for Horsfall to name.

I rang him and asked him could I take her and give the Mairie a tow, he refused, saying he had not had the final payment. I rang Horsfall at New Plymouth, who said he would fly up with the cheque arriving at six thirty at the Spit.

I gave Roy the story and he let me take her and give the Mairie a tow off. We towed him back to Mansion House where we beached her. The Mairie had taken a heavy pounding, and I was not game to take her to Sandspit to get Horsfall, he had to stay in Warkworth till the morning.

The next morning I took the Kawau Isle over, the wind had dropped but a big swell was running, and the Kawau Isle performed. She was like a cork, she rolled, pitched and surfed down the waves, quite an interesting trip. Roy took her to Auckland to get her survey, and the Marine Dept. made him put three ton of ballast in, it made a different ship of her. When she was built she was open, the passengers sitting in the open on deck, she was covered in after I left.

I did a trip from the Spit one night in the Princess for thirty five divers, each diver had a lead belt and two bottles which I stowed in the hold. After clearing the Matakana river somebody noticed steam coming out of the hold. On lifting the hatch we found about three to four feet of water and rising. I got the divers onto the hand pump and lifted the belts and bottles out putting them on one side to give her a list, as the water was coming in the grommet around the exhaust pipe. The weight of the gear put her down to deck level and being dark I had not noticed how far down she was.

I sent out a May Day and was picked up by the Fishery Patrol M L anchored off Kawau. He came at speed arriving within a quarter of an hour - good job he did as I was all for dumping the belts and bottles over board. He took the gear and the passengers, a couple stayed behind to help pump the ship out.

I had visions of the Nancibell being sunk the same way.

There were not a great many boats serving Kawau in my time. I left in 1961. My fast boat was named Pegasus, I used her for about twelve months.

So the Northern Co. started and then the Nancibell and Korora.

The Eva, and Iris Moana, the Onewa, and the Moratana, the Glen Rosa, the Mairie, Kawau Isle, the Island Princess.

The Northern Co. scow Toa, called occasionally as did the Vesper and the Rangī. The Florence Kennedy came now and again, mostly on fishing trips.

Capt. Ladd ran a twice weekly service from Auckland with his Grumman Widgeon plane. A forty minute service to Auckland was not bad, a bit expensive, but well patronised.

Capt. Brown in the Aqua Vadis started running special trips from the Spit about six months before I left.

Eric Harrison's Aotearoa came regularly every Sunday in the summer for five years.

Roy Lidgard gave up boat building on Kawau, going back to his yard in Auckland and coming home on Friday night with Capt. Lawler on the Ngaroma. In the summer they would bring up to thirty P class boats on deck, and the kids would race in the Bon Accord on Saturday and Sunday, going back on Sunday night to Auckland.

The Police launch Deodar, ran quite a service to Kawau, trying to catch Horsfall selling grog after hours. She came odd hours of the day and night, even anchoring in Ladies Bay and sending a couple of policemen ashore dressed in dirty shorts like yachties. They never caught Horsfall, somebody always saw them coming and let the Manager know.

In the season, Mansion House had a Dine and Dance on Saturday nights. A boat left Sandspit at eight, picking up the Warkworth people, it was always well patronised, returning at oneish on Sunday morning. It was a very happy trip, the Kawau Isle running aground in the Matakana river on several occasions.

On one particular day I took off from School House Bay to do the mail run, it was low water. The Kawau Isle behaved differently and I found her hard to steer, she seemed to be making hard work of it. Looking back at the mud flats I noticed the tide was rolling in quite fast - big waves in fact. The tide was full in at ten o'clock, and it was not due till three p.m. - quite unusual.

At midday the Mansion House received a warning from the Marine Dept. that a tidal wave was on its way from Chile, and it should arrive about three o'clock, suggesting that every body should go to higher ground. Most people did, even the staff at Mansion House went, there being no guests as it was off season. Three o'clock came and went, nothing happened. I believe the wave came early in the morning when I was coming out of School House. It was a good job it did, if it had come at high tide another nine or

ten feet of water would have swamped a lot of places including Mansion House.

When I first knew Kawau there were about two hundred red deer on the island, some of them quite tame, the tame ones coming to feed on the lawn with the wallabies at the back of Mansion House, not disturbing the peacocks.

The kookaburras were very thick, one would hear them laughing most of the day, especially if you tripped over or hit your thumb with a hammer.

After the war the trigger happy yuppies and yachties soon cleaned the deer out.

Ray Vincent was there from 1946 till 1950 and Horsfall after that. I left in 1963 and I do not know how long he stayed.