

Tauranga in the 1940s: Ann Baker's memories

I remember –



About 1945 the whole area from Memorial Park up to 11th Avenue was swampy – blackberries and drains, horse paddocks.

About 1947 the Gate Pa School was built and many State houses were built around it opposite the hospital, in 18th, 19th and 20th Avenues, also around the R.S.A. and up to about 23rd Avenue. This allowed all the families living in the transit camp (where the cricket area is at the Domain) to move south to these new homes and school, which seemed to cut the Tauranga Primary School roll in half.

I remember going to town and seeing many Maori ladies with the moko tattooed on their chins. Also the building at the end of The Strand next to Guinness Bros, where I believe the island Maori people would stay and wait for the boat to take them home to Motiti or Matakana Islands. I remember the polio epidemic, when the school was closed; I remember Cameron Road as one roadway with very large berms on either side.



Aerial view of Kopurererua, early 1950s. Saleyards middle right, Churchill Road opposite; Judea Road above & London Place; Waihi Road up to the summit.

I remember the road to Judea from the hill going down 11th Avenue. The river course was changed and land reclaimed by the rubbish dump – before the Judea bridge and over the bridge on the right was Beazley Builders and Bainscotts, on the left were swampy cow paddocks. Further up were the saleyards.

Sometimes after the sale we would try to ride on the sheep – until I fell into the sheep dip – my brother pulled me out!

Mrs Jamison had the Judea Store and she had as a pet a big tortoise in her large garden (it is now London Place). Next to the saleyards was Robins' long row of lovely big walnut trees and along his main road boundary growing in his hedge were beautiful climbing roses.

I had many rides on the donkeys at the Mount. They had no guide but walked by themselves from about the Surf Life Saving club rooms to around a big rock by the blowhole. There were about four or five donkeys.



Wreckage from the *Ranui*,
December 1950.

I was at the Mount beach one day when people were searching for bodies from the *Ranui* shipwreck, near where the Surf Life Saving Club is now. I saw out in the surf the rescuers bringing in a body on a stretcher. It was covered with a blanket, but the horror of my memory is the arm hanging down and his watch still on.

The road to the Mount was along Welcome Bay up the spiral on to Kairua Road and along to the Mount. There was a shop on the corner of Kairua and Welcome Bay roads, also a garage at Welcome Bay about opposite Green Meadows.

I'm a fourth generation Tauranga person.