

## Whakatane & District Historical Society Trip to White Island



On Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September a group of 43 went on the Historical Society's trip to White island. The trip was organised to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the mining disaster on the island in September 1914. We were lucky it was a beautiful spring day with a clear blue sky and very little wind.



Once we were on the Island we gathered around the site where the miners living quarters had been. The tour guides and also Morley West of the Historical Society told the story of how a land slide combined with thermal activity resulted in a lahar which covered this area to depths of from 2 to 7 metres. The living quarters all disappeared and of the 10 miners there was no trace.



From there the party walked up the crater valley -saw sulphur chimneys -got close to the thermal activity in the lake - checked out the acidity of the little streams - heard stories of life on the island and finally walked through the remains of the old factory.

We reboarded the boat and were taken right around the island. The tour guides pointed out the new site of the accommodation buildings and the dangerous arduous track the miners would have taken when they couldn't go to work by boat.

Around the island and during the crossings between Whakatane and White Island the crew from White Island Tours were most informative. They chatted to the "tourists" giving details of marine life- birds, mammals and fish and the geology of the island in a very friendly manner.

We would like to say a very big thank-you to Patrick and his team at "White Island Tours" for a wonderful day.

