



Denise Moody and Dot Wilson

## Recommended

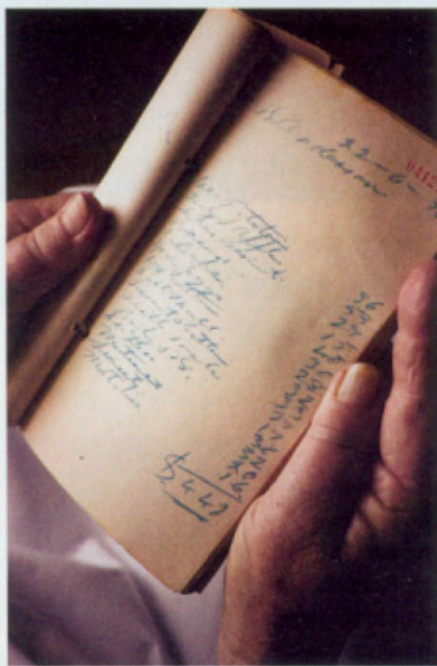
### Walk into History

A century of successful retailing in Opotiki.

“There’s a lot of history here. This was the oldest Four Square in the country,” enthuses Dot Wilson from behind the crowded kauri counter of Opotiki’s Shalfoon & Francis grocery and hardware store.

Opened in the late 1800s by Lebanese brothers Antony, George and Steven Shalfoon, the store passed down through the family for more than 100 years, closing only in 2000. Now the Opotiki Agriculture and Heritage Society has refurbished the store as a museum. It’s a remarkable walk into retail history, with advertising signs, hardware, furniture, old phones, bottles and jars, and hundreds of grocery boxes and tins ranging from Winning Post Chocolates to Colgate Dental Cream.

“They sold everything. They were real entrepreneurs,” says Wilson. “We’ve had visitors from all over the world say they’ve never seen anything like this, still functioning as a business until so recently.”



ADRIAN MALLOCH

Photos include one from 1899 showing Rua Kenana, the Maori prophet and leader who was based in Te Urewera – and was a regular customer. “We always knew [the store] was special. But the more we delve into it, the more special we realise it is.” JIM ROBINSON

127 Church St, ph (07) 315-5193.  
**The Shalfoon & Francis Museum and nearby Opotiki Museum are open weekdays and Saturday mornings; \$5 adults, \$2.50 child, \$10 family.**